

Window on Jordan

Dust storms and odd-shaped balls

By John Fenn
Star Staff Writer
COME DOWN to Sports City on a Friday afternoon, (around 3pm), and you will witness a very strange phenomenon. You will have never seen a dust storm like it before, randomly moving from one side of a converted polo-pitch to the next. If you stay and observe this phenomena long enough, you will see that an odd shaped ball is propelled up and out of the dust storm every once in a while, only to be consumed again within a matter of seconds.

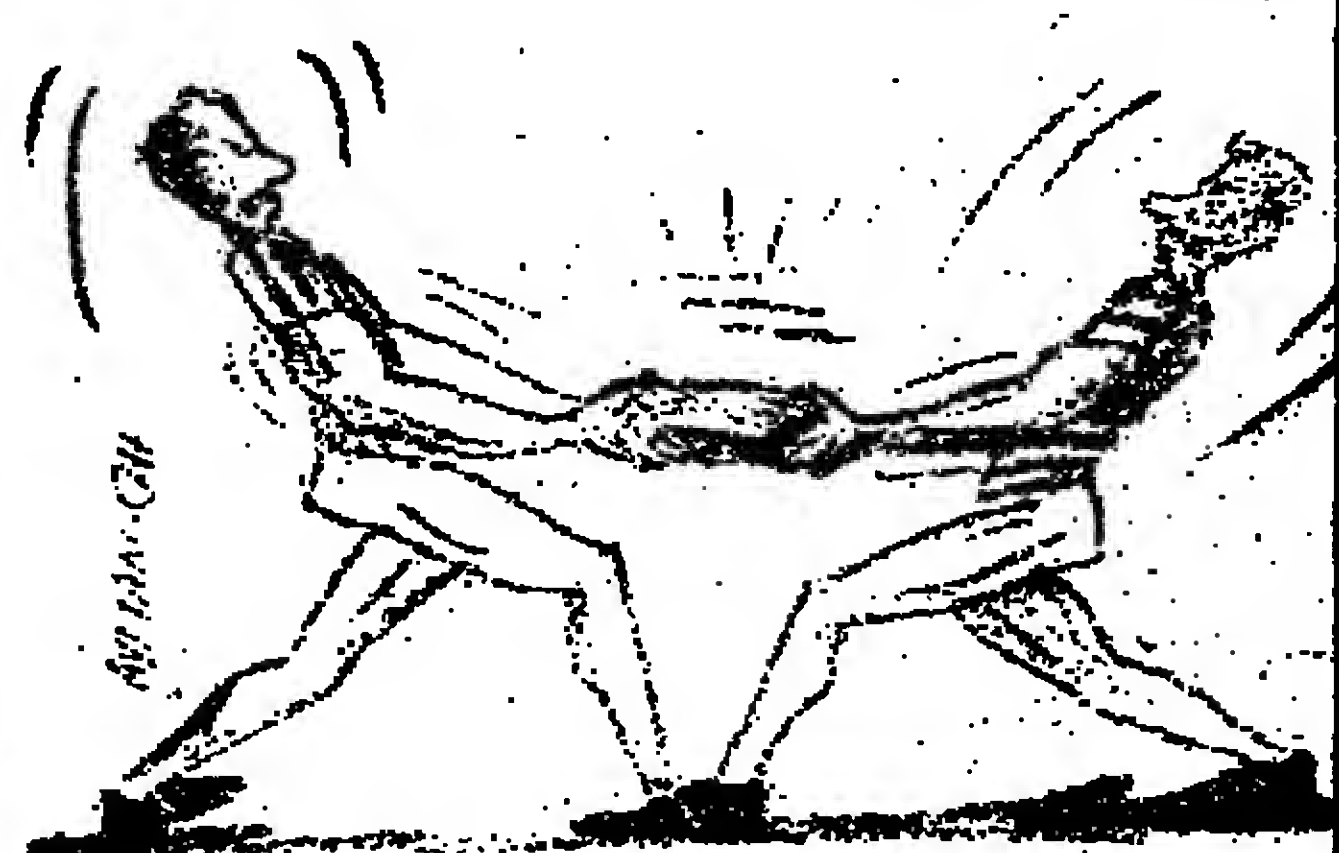
Should you stay for about an hour and a half, the dust storm will eventually settle to reveal the bruised and tired members of the Jordan Rugby Football

Club (JRFC).
Yes, Rugby is alive in Jordan. With the kind permission of HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, and the management at Sports City, and through the fund-raising efforts of the JRFC, there is now a rugby pitch in Jordan, complete with posts and a lot of sand. Every Friday afternoon, construction work on the latest sports complex—in preparation for the forthcoming Pan Arab Games (August 1999)—comes to a temporary stand still, as the bemused workers drop their tools and observe the dust storm.

So as to keep the construction work on schedule, and to reassure the workers that the dust storm is

not a localized 'Mitch,' a brief outline of the game is needed here. There are 15 players (8 Forwards and 7 Backs) in a rugby team, and the game is played with an oval-shaped ball. Every player is allowed to handle, kick, and run with the ball, and the object of the game is to put the ball over your opponents try-line (a Try), which is like the end-zone for you Grid-Iron fans. You get 5 points for doing this, and an extra 2 points if you kick the ball between the posts (a Conversion), and 3 points if it is as a result of a penalty or drop kick. During the game you will see scrums, line-outs, rucks and

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اسبوعية سياسية مستقلة

Le Jourdain
Supplément en français du Star

- Crise de l'eau
- L'accusation
- L'école du silence

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The Star congratulates His Majesty King Hussein on his 63rd birthday and on the occasion of the ascension of the Prophet to heaven.

Race for Lower House Speaker heats up

By Ibtisam Awadat
Star Staff Writer

The campaign for the elections of the Lower House Speaker has started early. With the next ordinary session beginning on 28 November, election fever is already heating up.

Until now, seven candidates have declared their intention to contest the post, although the number is expected to be reduced within the coming days following behind-the-scenes negotiations among the running deputies.

Abdel Karim Al Daghoul, a former minister of justice, pulled out of the race in favor of fellow bloc member, Ali Abu Al Ragheb. The Coalition Bloc has 13 deputies.

"Each candidate believes he has a chance of winning," Abu Al Ragheb tells *The Star*. "We need to make Parliament a better place to express people's opinions, since this platform represents all Jordanians," he says.

Four of the running candidates are supported by different parliamentary blocs. Current Speaker Saad Hayel Srour, who is considered a tough candidate to beat, has so far ensured the support of two blocs of 27 deputies (Solidarity and National blocs with 18 and 9 deputies respectively).

"We can't predict the results now, even if a deputy is backed by a bloc or two," says Srour who hopes to be re-elected for the fifth time. In addition to the two blocs supporting him, Srour claims to have the backing of a number of independent deputies.

In evaluating the work of the



Abu Ragheb

Participation during the first year of its mandate, Srour says he is satisfied with his achievements, "although I was not personally convinced of all the decisions taken. But as a speaker of the Lower House, I have to respect and defend all decisions taken by the majority."

Although there are rumors of outside influence in the speaker election, officials quickly moved to dispel them. Chief of the Royal Court Dr Jayad Al Anani denied that there was any influence during a meeting he held recently with the candidates.

Srour, who served as a minister in three governments and as a deputy since 1989, tells *The Star*, "the Palace is for all Jordanians, therefore, it's behind all 80 members who represent the entire Jordanian society. It's really for the depu-



Innab

ties to make up their minds." Srour is facing tough opponents from candidates such as Abdel Hadi Majali, general



Srour

secretary of the National Constitutional Party. Majali who is a former minister and a respected politician is backed

by his Al Wifaq bloc of 14 deputies.

Dr Ahmad Innab, is another candidate who is counting on the support of his bloc. Dr Innab studied Medicine in Turkey and was elected in 1989 and in 1997 to represent the Ajloun constituency. Innab is being backed in the elections by the six deputies of the Parliamentary Action Bloc.

Meanwhile, Abdel Raouf Rawabdeh is in the race as an independent candidate. Rawabdeh's bid to become Speaker in last year's ordinary session was unsuccessful. Rawabdeh refused to comment on the subject.

Dr Abdullah Akaileh and Dr Mohammed Ouran are campaigning with opposition deputies for support.

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Mass celebrations expected on the King's birthday

AMMAN (Star)—Celebrations for His Majesty King Hussein's birthday on Saturday 14 November will take on a special flavor following the news that the King is expected to return home at the beginning of next month.

The King is currently undergoing treatment at the Mayo Clinic, and is responding well by all accounts.

The government announced that both Saturday and Sunday (14 and 15 November) would be a public holiday. The celebrations will be launched at a special festival to be held at Al Hussein Sports City in Amman on 14 November, and the festivities are expected to last all week.

Thousands of Jordanian youth from all over the Kingdom will gather at the football stadium to celebrate the King's imminent return. The ceremony is due to begin at 10 am, and will include aerial acrobatics performed by the Royal Jordanian Air Force.

HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, will deliver a speech to the public during the celebrations at the stadium. Later in the day, Prince Hassan will walk through the streets of Amman.

to oversee the celebrations, and to share the occasion with the Jordanian people. A cultural carnival will also be held at the Palace of Culture at the Sports City. It will include artistic, cultural and musical exhibitions with live performances by folklore troupes from all around the Kingdom in celebration of King Hussein's birthday.

Similar public festivities will take place in all of the 11 governorates of the Kingdom.

The celebrations will mark the Jordanian people's eagerness to receive the King upon his return from the United States. Their admiration towards the King was further enhanced following his courageous intervention during the recent Wye Plantation talks between the Palestinians and the Israelis. The King's personal sacrifice in the name of peace stirred the emotions of every Jordanian and pushed his international reputation to new heights.

The scenes will be reminiscent of 1992, when over one million Jordanians poured out the streets of the capital in joyous and spontaneous celebrations following the King's return from cancer surgery in the United States. ■



Military service expected soon

By Star Staff Writer

MILITARY SERVICE, suspended since 1992, is likely to be reinstated in Jordan, according to unofficial reports. Reasons for restoring the two-year service may have to do with rising unemployment and upon the recommendations of the Minister of Administrative

Development, Bassam Emoush. He suggested that military service would be a practical way of curtailing unemployment.

Dr Saleh Tarawneh, Secretary General at the Ministry of Labor, announced recently that the official Jordanian unemployment rate stood at 14.4 percent in 1997, and that this figure was roughly divided between male and females (15,500 unemployed from both sexes).

Mr Emoush met last Monday with officers from the Jordanian Armed Forces (JAF), and reached an understanding concerning the mechanism of

reintroducing voluntary military service. "We are planning to hold further meetings next week with the representatives from the JAF," Emoush was quoted by the local press. "But the volunteer will have to serve a three month military training course. The remainder of the two-year service will be spent with public and private institutions in order to give them practical experience in various fields."

The ministry will leave the choice of profession to the volunteer, after they have served the basic three month training course. "The expected monthly

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In Iraq's classrooms, Uncle Sam gets an F

By Howard Schneider

BAGHDAD—The children at the Wakadi School know from their parents that some things are lacking in this era of UN sanctions against Iraq. And they think they know who is to blame.

"America has hurt us. America is our enemy," said Yasser Jabar Abbas, 11. "They attacked the schools. America attacked homes and apartments." "Life before was better," added Athara Harumad, 13. "We can't buy good food."

Beyond that, however, the world view from the children's classroom in downtown Baghdad becomes less definitive and suggests the degree to which education has been as much a casualty of Iraq's isolation as has its health standards and income.

Among a group of children 10 to 13 years old, finishing their last year in primary school and selected by their teacher as the most articulate of the class, none knew that their country's army had entered neighboring Kuwait in 1990, and none knew that other Arab nations had participated in the US-led military

coalition that reversed the Iraqi invasion.

Immersed in the Koran because of the country's mandatory religious-education classes and big fans of President Saddam Hussein as well as the Tom and Jerry cartoon show, they said they know little about the seismic events of the last decade that may have shaped their options in life as much as any other factor.

All they can say with certainty, in fact, is that American bombs fell on their country and that afterward it was harder to get meat and eggs and cheese. It is a logic that school admin-

istrators share.

The children have been taught what they need to know, Ibrahim said, that "the reason for the embargo is that Iraq is a big country and is the mother of the Arabs, and America does not want Iraq to become a great country."

Discussion of the Kuwait invasion is avoided, he said, because "we don't consider Kuwait a country."

Likewise, any mention of the fact that Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other countries in the region took part in the war against Iraq is also excluded because "Iraq is trying to strengthen our relations with Arabs," Ibrahim said.

The status of public education in Iraq is an emerging concern of UN officials stationed here. They note that after nearly two decades of conflict, first against Iran, then following the invasion of Kuwait, school enrollment has dropped and illiteracy has increased.

"This country had achieved practically universal primary education," said Philippe Hefinck, head of the UN Children's Fund in Baghdad. Now, however, UN statistics indicate that fewer than 70 percent of 6-year-olds are enrolling in school on time. Illiteracy, meanwhile, increased from an estimated 27 percent during the mid-1980s to around 40 percent today.

In an interview with the Reuters news agency following his recent resignation as head of UN humanitarian programs in Iraq, Denis Halliday said he felt the intellectual isolation of Iraq's younger generation may have as profound an effect on the country's future

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**World
REPORT**

On the occasion of
**The Prophet's
Ascension**
Arab Bank is honoured
to convey to
His Majesty
King Hussein
and to the Arab and Islamic
nations its felicitations
and best wishes



ARAB BANK

On the occasion of
His Majesty King Hussein's Birthday
Arab Bank conveys its congratulations, and wishes
His Majesty a speedy recovery and a safe return home.



ARAB BANK

05.11.1998

The Peace Corps in Jordan Building bridges of friendship and understanding

By Ghassan Joha
Star Staff Writer

TRUE PEACE is not merely the absence of hostility. It requires a lot of cooperation to nourish the acceptance and appreciation of coexistence. In this bid for peace, the role development is a powerful tool, as it increases people's social and economic awareness.

With this goal in sight, the Peace Corps was officially launched by the President John F. Kennedy on March 1961, with the aim of helping people of developing countries to acquire skills and training. The initiative came after President Kennedy's call to the Americans to, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."

Today, over 6000 volunteers have taken part in the Peace Corps, serving in 95 countries worldwide. More than 151,000 Americans have joined the corps since its founding, providing

assistance in education, health, agriculture, and the environment.

The two main objectives of the corps are to promote better awareness between the American people and the world, and to provide volunteers to work in the social and economic development fields. A lot of the work is focused on the community, and aims to protect the local environment, whilst creating economic opportunities.

The Peace Corps, however, is much more than a development agency. Its volunteers embody some of the most enduring values: Hope, optimism, freedom, and opportunity. They also receive intensive language and cross-cultural training, in order to relate with the concerned communities. The men and women who serve as volunteers, reflect the rich diversity of the US. They also share a common spirit of service, dedication, and idealism.

At the invitation of the Jordanian government, the first Peace Corps volunteers arrived in Jordan in May 1997.

The 27 volunteers began their two-year mission working side by side with their Jordanian counterparts, touring and prospecting the different regions of the Kingdom. In July this year, another 36 volunteers joined their colleagues, and began their two-year service to benefit the Jordanian people.

Sending peace volunteers to Jordan has represented a



historic step in the development of relations between Jordan and the US, and is in accordance with the agreement signed in October 1996, after bilateral discussions between His Majesty King Hussein and the US President Bill Clinton. Earlier this year, Her Majesty Queen Noor had participated in the inauguration of the new headquarters of the Peace Corps in Washington, together with Mrs Hilary Clinton.

As most of Jordan's volunteers work with women projects, almost two-thirds of the corps consists of young women. The volunteers currently work under the auspices of the Ministry of Social Development, and coordinate their efforts with Jordanian NGOs, such as the Noor Al Hussein Foundation. Queen Alia Fund for Social Development, and the Jordan River Designs to name but a few.

Jordan is the eighth Arab country in which the Peace Corps have operated. Previously, the corps has sent volunteers to North Africa and the Arabian Peninsula. Volunteers have also served in most of the East-Asian countries, like Iran, Turkey and Pakistan. Jordan represents the 132nd country to have benefited from the Peace Corps, since its formation in 1961.

For the volunteers, the learning process is a two way thing. In their efforts to provide sustainable growth at the grass-root level, the volunteers acquire many skills from their Jordanian co-workers. The volunteers receive no special privileges, and live in the rural communities where their work is located. Their role has not changed since 1961: To build bridges of friendship and understanding among people, in the pursuit of peace among all nations.

Race for Lower House Speaker heats up

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"My top priority in the upcoming elections is to improve the image of Parliament in the eye of the public, which I believe is negative at present," says Dr Mohammed Ouan. Dr Ouan is one of the opposition deputies who voted in favor of the government in the confidence session, but was strongly criticized by his party.

"We shouldn't be satisfied with the role of surveillance. Instead we should be more active in the pursuit of democracy," Ouan says. "The executive authority should consult our council before even submitting a draft law and before taking any decision," Ouan continues. Ouan who didn't attend the meeting of Dr Anani believes that each candidate has

an equal chance to run for the office. "The support of the blocs can't always be a sign of success," Ouan added.

"The two stages of the speaker's election could turn things around, as the blocs' influence will be reduced after the number of candidates has been cut down to two. At this final stage, the independent deputies will then be the ones to determine the outcome."

Military service expected soon

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salary may be as much as JD100," the minister said.

The proposal is to be submitted to the Prime Minister soon and is expected to be endorsed before the Public Budget discussions get under way. "We do not know the exact cost of this project yet, because we are still calculating the number of appointees available, as well as the exact wage package," Emoush said.

The prospect of military service was welcomed by one Jordanian father, who told *The Star* that, "It is a good way to get our sons to work, because I am getting fed up with having to pay pocket money: three years after graduation."

Some observers highlighted

a constitutional point, as the old military service was frozen, but never abolished, and that talk of establishing a new service was unnecessary. "The cancellation of the old military service will need to be taken into account by the legislature, before any new system is put in place," said Sameer Khorfan, deputy president of Jordan Lawyers Association. "I am all for reinstating this service," Khorfan added, "not just for economic reasons, but because our youth need to be military trained in order to defend our country."

Reports suggested that the World Bank has advised against compulsory military service as a solution to Jordan's economic problems. The

World Bank believes military service would only burden the Treasury. The World Bank sees it as a short-term solution, because after the two-year term the candidates will be back on the unemployment line again.

Criticism hailed from other quarters as well. "I believe the reintroduction of a new system of military service is legally unenforceable," said Salem Nahhas, Secretary General of the Jordan People's Democratic Party (Husd). "The program, which the government is planning to introduce, may cause more problems, like an increase in administrative costs and resentment from possible discrimination during the recruitment process."

German exhibition in Amman 'Crossroads of Civilizations'

FOR MORE than 100 years now, German archaeologists have been working in Jordan to shed light on the ancient history of the region. There are but few areas in the world as productive and intriguing in new discoveries and exciting findings as Jordan. Before our eyes is unraveled the history and structure of some of the earliest villages and cities of humankind.

Since 1900, the German Protestant Institute of Archaeology (DEI), founded by the Conferences of German Evangelical Churches, has played a prominent role in such activities. Its first institute was established in 1902 in Jerusalem. Due to its increasing activities in Jordan, the institute built a permanent residence and office in Amman between 1976 and 1980 which was inaugurated in 1982. Since then the institute undertook fieldwork at many ancient sites and supported archaeological excavations of other German institutions, such as the German Archaeological Institute (DAI). It has been conducting excavations in the ancient Greco-Roman Decapolis city of Gadara (Umm Qais) during the past 25 years and it quickly became an integral part of the active archaeological community in the Kingdom.

More recently, a new aspect has been introduced to this long-standing tradition of joint archaeological work and protection of the sites, sometimes uncovered by generations of archaeologists, and often left exposed to the destructive elements of wind, weather, and environmental degradation. This aspect is now being taken care of through a project financed by the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) and executed by the GTZ (German Technical Cooperation), and is known as the "Jordanian-German Project for the Establishment of a Conservation and Restoration Center in Petra".

Now, in its fifth year of implementation, the project is in the process of creating a Jordanian institution that is able to plan, supervise, and advise on conservation and restoration work on historical sites, not only in Petra, but also in the entire country. It is being equipped with all the necessary tools, instruments, testing and research facilities. It is also in the process of being staffed with highly skilled personnel, currently in the final stages of training, to execute such demanding work that has to follow strictly international guidelines established for such work by UNESCO, ICOM (International Centre for the Study of Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property), and IFLP (Bavarian State Conservation Office).

Some of the results of this cooperation will be shown in an exhibition at the Royal Cultural Center, entitled "Crossroads of Civilizations", and subtitled as "More than 100 years of German Archaeological Activities in Jordan" (keeping in mind that the first German explorers arrived in Jordan in 1806). The opening of the exhibition will be on 12 November 1998 at 6:00 pm. The exhibition is jointly organized by the DEI and CARCIP and will last for two weeks.

Visitors will gain an overview of both the archaeological projects carried out by German archaeologists and scholars so far, as well as the German projects which are currently active in this field in Jordan, including the CARCIP project. Around 60 panels displaying written and pictorial information will be supplemented with 30 enlarged, poster-size photographs of excavations and restoration activities. In addition, Jordanian institutions cooperating with the German archaeological projects (the Department of Antiquities of Jordan, the Institute of Archaeology and Anthropology at Yarmouk University, the Royal Institute for Inter-Faith Studies in Amman, Friends of Archaeology) will present their organizations and work.

Furthermore, a variety of finds from sites of German archaeological projects will be exhibited. Four lectures on German archaeological and site conservation activities in Jordan and their cooperation with Jordanian institutions will accompany the exhibition. The lecturers will be held at the Goethe Institute, Amman.

On the occasion of
The Prophet's Ascension
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is honoured to convey to
His Majesty King Hussein
and to the Arab and Islamic
nations its felicitations and
best wishes

In Iraq's classrooms, Uncle Sam gets an F

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as any other aspect of the embargo.

Compared to their parents' generation, many of whom traveled frequently and often received some education outside Iraq, today's Iraqi children have seen little of the world, and those who might be able to leave the country for school often do so for good, depriving the society of their experience and training.

In a world of satellite

dishes, cell phones and global markets, they have grown up in a country whose skies are largely free of airplanes—the consequence of US-enforced flight bans and an international air-travel embargo and whose media is utterly subservient to the government. Tom and Jerry and some other outside programming is aired on state-run television but only in between lengthy tributes to the president.

CNN is piped into the Baghdad press center but is not

available, for example, at the city's top hotel, the Rasheed.

"They don't have a great deal of exposure to travel, even to reading materials, television, never mind technological change," Halliday said. "I think these people are going to have a real problem in terms of how to deal with the world in the near future."

What that means for the children at the Wakadiy school is a bright smile, a snap to attention and a shout of "Long live His Excellency Saddam Hussein!" when a foreign visitor enters the classroom—but a blank stare when that visitor asks if they have heard of the Internet or the World Wide Web. In her family's small apartment, down an alleyway near the carpet souk and open markets of Rasheed Street, the parents of Rana Mohammed, 14, explain that their daughter has dropped out of school because they can't afford the clothes and other expenses.

Her father, Mohammed Rasheed, said his salary as a security guard at the Agriculture Ministry once was enough to feed and clothe his family well. Now they rely on government food rations and even then have had to sell much of their furniture to survive.

His eldest son, Wallid, is now helping with his salary as a soldier, but the young man's ambitions far outstrip the realities of a city that was, in the time of ancient Babylon, a center of world culture.

Wallid, 22, said he'll leave the army after his term is done to look for a "good job"—preferably one as a driver on the cab route from Amman, Jordan, to Baghdad.

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Yugoslav Airlines changes its flight schedule

THE YUGOSLAV Airlines announced last week that it changed the timings of its scheduled flights between Amman and East-European cities. These changes mean that passengers from Amman will now arrive to their destinations on the same day. The cities are Moscow, Belgrade, Bucharest, Kiev, Prague, Sarajevo, Skopje, and Zurich.



Jihad Mdanat

The Hajar Agency has signed recently many agreements with some of the Yugo-

slav tourism and travel agencies to receive the tourists from Yugoslavia, especially those concerned with the trade and

marketing fields to promote the purchasing of Jordanian goods.

Since the Yugoslav Airlines has canceled its flights to Dubai, its agent in Amman continues to make contacts with Jordanian public and private institutions to facilitate the entry of tourist groups. The first tourist group is expected to arrive by Christmas.

Mr Mdanat stated that he has met with the Yugoslav Ambassador in Amman, and exchanged the latest developments in the tourism field. The Ambassador has showed his full readiness to grant the concerned Jordanians visas to visit Yugoslavia.

Tickets are confirmed from the Royal Jordanian or the Yugoslav Airlines. Mr Mdanat ended by saying that such steps will promote tourism between the two friendly countries.

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JORDAN

W E E K



An unconventional report on Jordanian news and views edited by Marwan Al Asmar

Minister speaks
Nasser Jodeh, Minister of Information, urged the media to stop listening to rumors about the arrival of His Majesty King Hussein to Jordan, adding that the decision of the return lies in the hands of his doctors. When the decision is made, the minister said, the King himself will announce the date of his return. However, there are other rumors that the King would be expected in the Kingdom in the first half of December, after a two-week recuperation. In his weekly media meetings, Jodeh said that he expects a Royal Decree to be issued inviting the Lower House to a special session. This is based on article 28 of the Constitution which states that if the King is absent from the country for four months then a Lower House session must be called for. The meeting will be held for one day on 19 November.

Letter of loyalty
President of Jordan University Dr. Waleed Al Masri and his deputies, teaching staff and students signed a "letter of love and loyalty" to His Majesty King Hussein on the occasion of his birthday, and wished him a speedy return home. Mr. Mohamed Taghafa of the Jordanian Society for Cultural and World Peace is organizing the signatures for the letter. He said that HRH Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, was the first person to sign. The letter is 250 meter long and 70 centimeters wide. The letter which weighs 409 kilogram is expected to be recorded in the Guinness Book Records for the longest letter in the world.

Sent to court

The case of the Director-General of the National Aid Fund has been sent to the prosecutor of the Amman Court of First Instance. Minister of Information Nasser Jodeh said the decision has been taken on the recommendations of the Minister of Social Development, Mohammad Khair Mamsar, who said that there is enough information to prove that the Director-General has been involved in administrative and financial irregularities. If proved right, the Director-General could face prosecution.

Out of date

The Ministry of Trade and Industry has decided at last to destroy 2751 bags of milk. The out of date milk was to be sold as animal feed. It was only after pressure from the National Society for Consumer Protection (NSCP) that the Ministry's decision was made. The NSCP earlier said that it was best to destroy the material to make sure that it couldn't be used for foodstuff production.

No love lost

Deputy Mohammad Al Azaydeh has at last come out and resigned from the Islamic Action Front. Al Azaydeh, who is now the rapporteur of the Public Freedoms Committee, had been searching for his break with the IAF since after he defied the party-line and decided to stand in the general elections of 1997. Mr. Azaydeh said that it was private reasons that forced him to leave the party. His resignation came just four days after Abdullah Al Akaleh decided to quit the Front.



Azaydeh



Police Beat

JORDAN WAS shocked recently at the murder of Assistant Secretary General of the Jordan Valley Authority (JVA), Mohammed Habashneh. He was shot last Saturday whilst at work in the town of Deir Alla, in the Jordan Valley. Mohammed Abed, entered the office of the victim and shot him in the chest with four bullets. Abed, a discharged technician at JVA, surrendered later to the police and confessed to the assault. Habashneh was rushed at once to hospital by his colleagues, but was declared dead upon arrival. He was 48.

This crime raises several questions among the public about this new type of murder. Criminals, surrendering themselves to the authorities after committing an offense, does not mean that the crimes are committed under control. Punishment must be strict to force people to respect the law and its regulations.

Speaking of punishment, a young man was sentenced to prison for 10 years of hard labor. The offender, Hassan Khalaf, was found guilty of

killing his father, in collaboration with his youngest brothers. The sentence was made last week by the Greater Criminal Court which sentenced the other two brothers to two years in prison.

These sentences were reduced from execution to 10 years hard labor for the older brother and five years for the younger brothers. Because of family appeals, the latter sentences were reduced to two years.

The offenders committed the crime earlier this year in Irbid, by beating their father with a heavy tool. Family disputes seem to be the main reason behind such crimes.

Last week, two wives were convicted of attempted murder. The two wives asked their children to buy sulfur liquid and mix it in the water tank in a bid to kill their husband and his third wife. The Supreme Court found the two children guilty of attempting murder, while accused the wives of motivating the crime.

Life on the streets

A phenomena that knows no limits

By Ibtisam Awadat
Star Staff Writer

"A WOMAN with a child is begging in a deplorable manner in front of a building in Jabal Al Hussein," said an angry woman on the phone, during a complaint to an official at the Social Defense Directorate (SDD). "There are children who are making a racket, please take them to their parents," she nervously added.

This is just one of the complaints that are received daily by the directorate. Officials are usually quick to respond, scurrying to the scene as soon as they receive the message. The unit normally includes a policeman, a conduct supervisor and a representative of the directorate. This time, *The Star* was on the spot to follow "the team."

The van headed towards Jabal Hussein, stopping in front of a commercial complex that houses a doctor's clinic, a couple of travel agencies and a few merchant shops.

At the entrance, a little boy latched on to the handle of the gate using it as a swing, holding a packet of chewing gum to sell. However, the first "catch" by the social services was Amer, a 12-year-old who was selling simple items in the busy street opposite the complex. The moment he was caught, the seven-year-old on the swing ran forward and the team grabbed him. His name was Mohammed, who turned to be the younger brother of Amer.

As they entered the van both boys started to cry. This time they didn't ask for money, only to be released. "Why have you arrested me and left my neighbor, it is not fair," Mohammed cried out. "Please leave my brother alone, he has to go to school. Take someone else instead," Amer pleaded.

It turned out that the little boys and their 17-year-old brother are supporting their family, after a tragic accident left their father permanently handicapped. Wandering in the said area was a barefooted little boy who ran away after he saw what happened to his friends. "His name is Eyad and we call him the gazelle, because he is very fast. I am very fast also, let me show you," Mohammed, with his childish tricks, told *The Star*.

"The last study we conducted indicated that poverty is not the main reason for begging. It's just an easy way to make a living," said Ali Samara, chief of the Vagrancy Department at the SDD.

After a tour of the neighborhood, the campaign members decided to release the two little boys, after telling them that they should go to school. Within the Social Precautionary Security Program for Protecting Childhood and Juveniles, the Ministry of Social Development receives many groups of "child beggars" in order to learn more about their economic and social conditions.

"This year we hosted 400 children. Those in the most need were transferred to the National Aid Fund to receive a monthly allowance," Samara continued. "Children then are handed over to their parents, with a signed undertaking to look after them and prevent them from begging again," Samara added.

Later that day, the police van went to Shmeisani. Outside one of the private hospitals, three women dressed in black sat



Ali Samara (2nd right) talks to 70 year old Khaleel before detaining him

outside the gate begging with out-stretched hands. As soon as the mini-bus arrived, the three got up and started to run. One was slow because she was pregnant, which made it easy for two members of the team to catch up with her. The other two took their shoes and black shawls off and threw them, and made their escape in a taxi.

The team caught Najla, a young pretty woman of 24, who got married



Photo by Mahmoud Shawka

when she was 14, and now has six children. Najla is a gypsy, since her tribe is divided between Jordan and Palestine.

"All my life I only knew one profession—begging. I do it from 9 until 2, and then I return home to my children, who I leave with my mother," Najla tells *The Star*.

Begging and vagrancy are becoming an increasing phenomena on our streets. It's an easy way of earning money. Women resort to begging because of divorce, or the loss of a male money earner.

Statistics at the SDD show that 1604 beggars were caught in 1997. By last September, the



Khaleel empties his pockets at the CCSC

figure was 766. But Samara expects the figure to double during the coming month of Ramadan.

Later, Sameera and her three children were caught wandering between people in the crowded streets of downtown, carrying her heavy cargo (a child on one arm and a boy and girl trailing behind). She didn't resist arrest and entered the van



Photo by Mahmoud Shawka

hands. Khaleel is 70, and suffers from diabetes and heart problems.

He has medical insurance and receives a monthly allowance of JD 50 from the National Aid Fund.

At the center, officials prepare a file for each new arrival. A routine is followed, as each one must have a file of his own, listing their personal information and belongings.

The "bounty" was small today, because they were taken in custody during the early hours of the day. The old man had the most profitable day, as he was caught with JD12.5 in his pocket, not to mention the sugar, coffee, oil and grains he had "collected" from various stores.

"These items are officially kept at the center, and will be returned to the shop owners when they are released," Sami Al Meri, the director of the CCSC, told *The Star*.

The center is a rehabilitation shelter for beggars and vagabonds. They stay there until the court hearing. "We have 12 male residents and one female. Most do not have any support, and suffer from chronic diseases," Meri adds. "We offer them food and clothes, in addition to health and psychiatric care."

Arrested beggars are released after a couple of days in detention. The painful reality is that they do not stop begging following their release, which consequently leads to their arrest once again.

Article 389 of the Penal Code stipulates 1 to 3 years imprisonment for "professional beggars," but the punishment is rarely applied.

"I've been the director for seven months now, and out of all the cases we have taken to court, 80 percent were released, only to repeat the violation," Meri added.

The court usually decides on a low bail, which most pay the same day and are set free. Once released they go about collecting the money they just paid.

One of the few times the law was implemented was in the case of Radi, a professional beggar. Radi is serving the last days of his sentence at the center.

The moment Radi saw members of the team he asked, "If I change my area, to Salt for instance, are you going to arrest me again?" Radi's question clearly indicates that the old man does not regret for one second what he did. It only proves that we urgently need harsher punishments to reduce this phenomena.

Striking Iraq!



ONCE AGAIN the Iraqi issue is making headlines. All Jordanians are wondering about the next American move. Will there be a military strike? Mousa Al Qalab of *Al Arab Al Yom* says after the UN passed a resolution condemning Iraq for being uncooperative with its inspectors, the possibility of a US military strike against the country is increasing, especially after Bill Clinton announced that he is open to all options. As we know only too well this can only mean that the US is perfectly willing for a direct hit.

Al Qalab says the American government has created a chain of military and security justifications for the presence of their forces in the Gulf. The first link of this chain is the UNSCOM inspectors, who said in their report that Iraq might use her short range missile program to produce long range missiles that can carry chemical and germ weapons. They are also worried that Iraq might use planes which are operated by remote control to spray the operation fields with chemicals which might be to their advantage in a military operation.

According to their report, Iraq uses the revenues of its sold oil to finance these projects and programs despite all the air land and sea patrols in the area.

The second link is the military forces in Kuwait and the Gulf do not compare to that of Iraq's arsenal. This makes the presence of the American and allied forces in the Gulf necessary. But what the US failed to mention, Qalab points out, is that the Iraqi army has been weakened considerably over the past eight years, because of the economic sanctions and the establishment of a no fly zone for Iraqi forces depriving them of the element of surprise.

Despite all this, the US is determined to continue the boycott, as lifting it will pose a major threat to Kuwait's strategic position, the writer says. Because of these facts the deputy director for Middle Eastern Programs in the Institute for International Strategic Studies in Boston, Anthony Cordman says, Kuwait needs to recruit and train additional forces to maintain its internal security. The Americans feel their presence or their forces to be necessary in the Gulf. Kuwaitis too, are quite comfortable with that presence. The third link in the chain is the increased tension in the region.

The fourth and final link is the amount of weapons which are sold to the countries of the region. All these factors coupled with the internal and external situation of the USA might make a military strike against Iraq an inevitable one. Such a strike will serve to link the chain created by the USA and strengthened by European loyalty and by the formal agreement from the UN and its Security Council, Al Qalab adds.

Fakri Qawar in *Al Rai* on the other hand discusses the US threat of a military strike Iraq in the light of the celebrations of the 50th anniversary of the Declaration of Human Rights. He says it is a real irony that those threats were condoned by the same organization that issued this declaration. Qawar wonders about the rights of Iraqis to live a dignified and peaceful life, and to practice their own sovereignty without interference from super powers and away from starvation, suppression and extermination. He says Iraqi children have the right to medicine and food, and Iraqi women have rights to feed their children and look after them. Qawar also wonders about the morality of a superpower when it decides to use weapons of mass destruction in attacking a country which has been suffering from economic sanctions for the past eight years.

Dr. Mohammed Al Mahasneh in *Ad Dussour* says the only one to benefit from a strike against Iraq is the USA and its allies, because by preventing Iraqi oil from reaching the international markets they can monopolize and control them. Furthermore, if the sanctions were lifted Iraq might pose a threat to Israel. Also the USA and Britain want Iraq to integrate in the new Arab regime which they created.

Dust storms and odd-shaped balls

Continued from page 1

into detail here. The beauty of the game is that there is a position for everyone, be you tall, short, round or perfect like me! No matter what size you are, there is a specialized position on the rugby pitch for you. The positions of Prop, Second-row, Scrum-half, Fly-half, and Wing will prove my point.

1) Prop (Forward): He is your normal sumo, night-club bouncer, body builder material, with very strong upper body strength. Not very quick around the pitch, his role is to dominate in the scrum, and to scare the life out of any unsuspecting back who should venture into his path. (Very few brain cells).

2) Second-Row (Forward): Your average basketball player—very tall, but lean and mobile. Useful in the line-out, when he must jump up and catch the ball. (More brain cells than a prop).

3) Scrum-half (Back): Your Prince Naseem Hamed type, welter-weight boxer material. Small, but very strong and lightning quick. He links the forwards and the backs together, and is a play-maker. (More brain cells than the whole of the forwards put together, but then that's not very hard).

4) Fly-half (Back): Your Quarterback/football player, with average height and weight ratio. Very good at catching, kicking and running with the ball. The play-maker of the team, who decides all the moves. (Brain cells in abundance).

5) Wing (Back): Your Carl Lewis/Donovan Bailey sprinter material, extremely fast. His job is to catch the ball and run very fast towards the opponents' try-line. (A simple task, so brain cells are not compulsory, but are recommended).

With this ability to include all sizes, it is no wonder that

rugby is the fastest growing sport in the world. Almost every Arab country has a rugby team now, and one of the biggest tournaments on the rugby calendar is the Dubai International Sevens (7 a side rugby is a shorter, faster game, and Fiji are the current World Champions). Morocco are by far the most advanced rugby nation in the Arab World (mirroring their success on the football field), and they always do well at Dubai. The game is now played on every continent of the world, and the current World Champions are the South Africans. So what attracts players to the game? This question was posed to the Club Captain, Farah Nushaiwat, who replied saying, "The game of rugby is special to me, because it generates a level of team spirit and camaraderie unlike any other game I know. It is a hard, physical and fast game, which keeps you fit, but there

is also the strategic side of the game which is often underestimated." Mohammed Faris, meanwhile concentrated on the fitness aspect of the game. "You need to have everything really: upper body strength, speed, and more importantly, stamina." The game in Jordan has come on in leaps and bounds, and now boasts its very own rugby tournament—The Prince Abdullah Trophy—played in April every year, bringing in teams from Egypt, Lebanon and the Gulf. In addition, the JRFC will be participating in the Dubai International Sevens in December—for the third year running. Should anyone be interested in learning about the game of rugby, then they can always come down to a training session on Friday afternoon (3pm) at Sports City. Location: If you can't find the polo field, then look out for the dust storm!

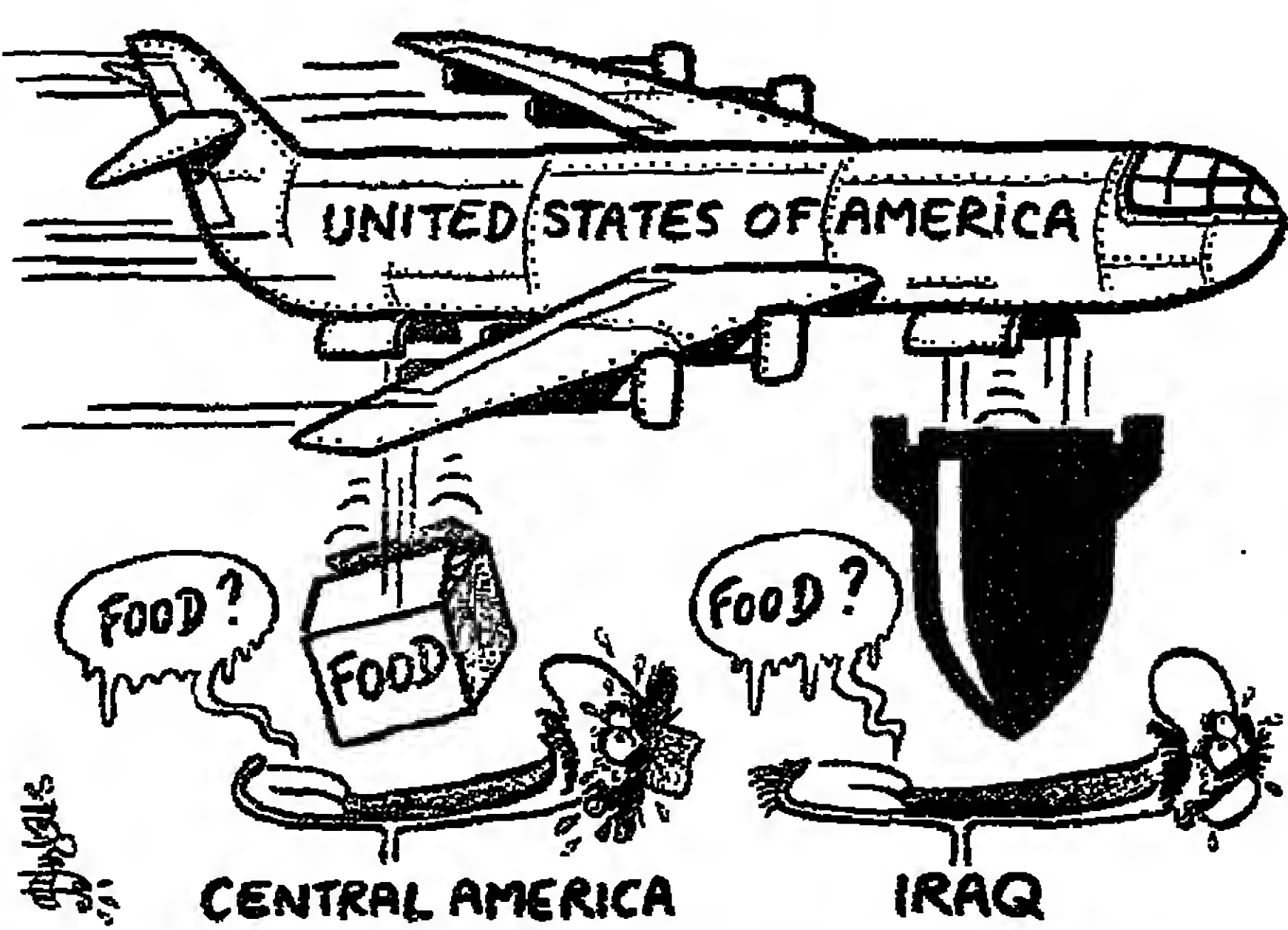
UNRWA commissioner approves deal

Amman, (Petra)—United Nations Relief and Works Agency (UNRWA) Commissioner General Peter Hansen approved some demands of the Committees of UNRWA Workers and Employees to solve the dispute between the management and the workers of the UNRWA.

Hansen approved the right of early retirement for those who finished 25 years of service as of 1999 without losing any of their legal rights and gains.

Committees' sources said the Commissioner General also approved the amendment of the allowance for schools' principles to become 10 percent of the total amount of the salary.

Committees' representatives will meet the Commissioner General early next month to discuss the outstanding issues of dispute with the management, especially those concerning changes of the wages' policy, appointments and health insurance.



Our Say...

Awaiting the King's return

JORDANIANS WILL mark His Majesty King Hussein's 63rd birthday on Saturday with great hope and emotion. The King, who is recovering from cancer at Mayo Clinic in the United States, is scheduled to return to Jordan by the end of November. Jordanians have been following news of the King's response to treatment with anticipation and hope. Latest reports confirming that the King is responding well to treatment and that he is expected to be released soon have put Jordanians in an upbeat mood. The reunion will surely be an emotional and spontaneous one.

The King's recent participation in the marathon negotiations at Wye Mills between the Palestinians and the Israelis has not only pushed for a breakthrough in the stalemated talks, but it also boosted public morale in Jordan. The fact that the King chose to join the talks and contribute to their success at a time when he was still under treatment left us all humbled by his courage and dedication to the noble cause of peace. The King's role, wisdom and diligence have been praised by all concerned. His contribution to the cause of Middle East peace is indelible and through his dedication and efforts Jordan's role in regional politics has been cemented.

The past few months have not been easy for Jordan. But the King's vigilance and wise leadership have combined to lead Jordan through tough challenges. His Royal Highness Crown Prince Hassan, the Regent, has proved himself more than capable to lead and follow in the footsteps of the King. A new government has been sworn in and the country is again on the road of economic recovery.

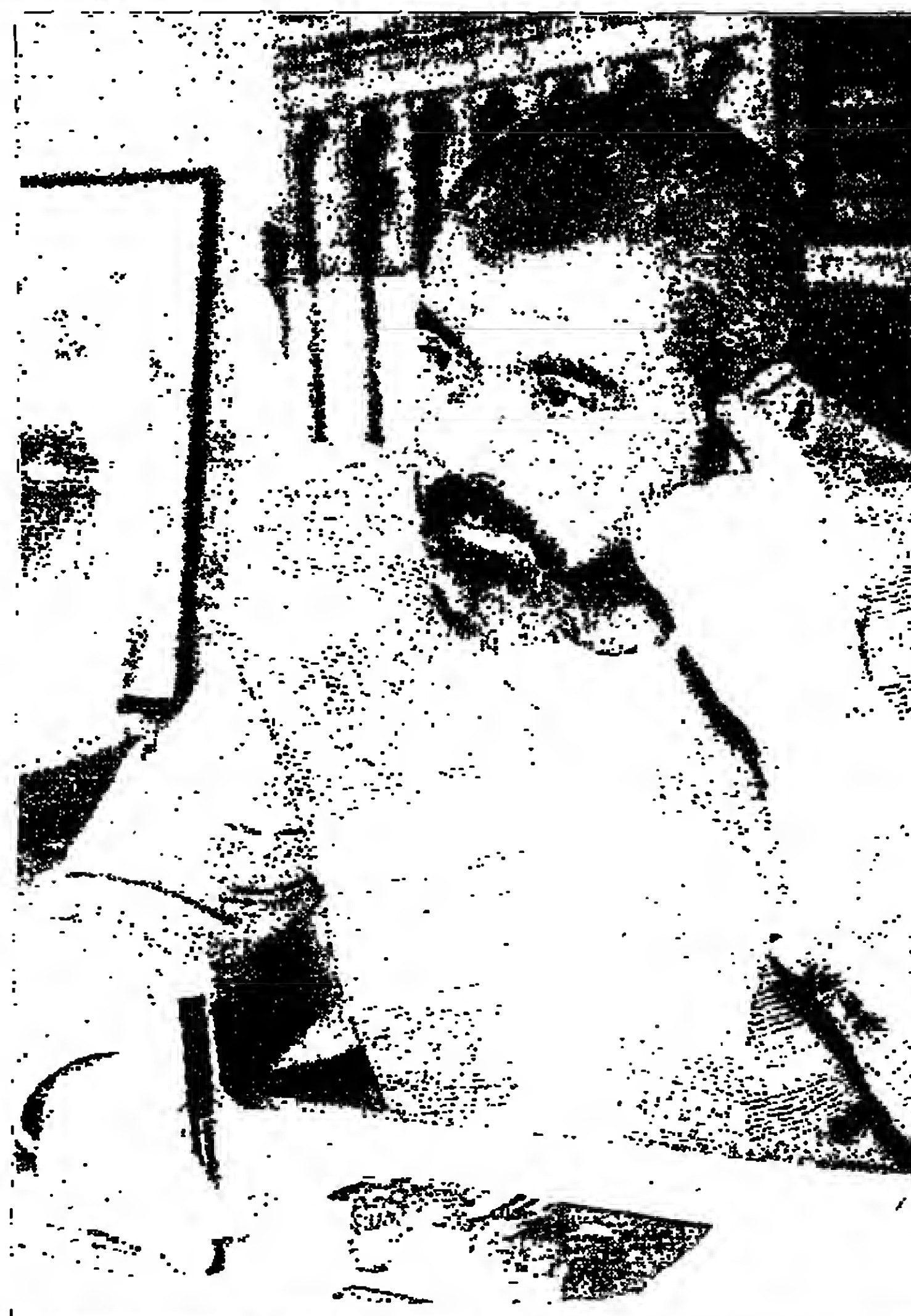
There is no doubt that the King's safe return to Jordan will be one of the most historic events in the annals of the Kingdom. It will mark a milestone in its struggle to secure a prosperous future for its citizens in a region troubled by unrest. Jordan has maintained its progressive march towards achieving the goals it had set for itself a long time ago. It is a country of institutions and laws and it is a nation of builders and achievers.

The King's birthday has always been an occasion for celebration and remembrance. During the past decades, Jordan has made tremendous leaps forward towards building a better future. This has not been easy for a country of meager resources. But Jordanians can all feel proud about what has been achieved so far. But much lies ahead and the country must not lose sight or focus of its objectives.

We have learned a lot from King Hussein, especially in the past few months as he courageously battled against cancer. His return to Jordan soon caps a personal struggle and triumph against illness. But it also presents us all with an unforgettable lesson. One cannot do without courage, hope and personal determination. This is something for all Jordanians to remember, as they join hands to work for a better tomorrow.

Ismail Haniyeh, a leading Hamas official answers questions during an interview with Reuters in his organization's information office in Gaza Strip November 11. Haniyeh said his movement held a meeting with the Palestinian Authority on Monday to discuss ways of defusing tension which erupted after an Israeli bus in Gaza Strip October 29, 1998 where Hamas claimed responsibility.

Reuters



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Roars of the mighty echo in the region

By Marwan Asmar
Star Staff Writer

THE ROARS of the mighty can be heard from a distance, as the latest Iraqi decision to withdraw cooperation with United Nations inspectors has sent the United States sabre-rattling for the umpteenth time. While some kind of a deal could be reached at the final hour to avert the expected US airstrike, the region is once again in a jittery state.

Evidence of this is the fact that the UN has already started pulling its personnel from Iraq, normally the clear signal of a forthcoming air-strike by the United States. US Defence Secretary William Cohen has been in the region trying to whip up support from the Arab countries against that beleaguered state. Every time there is an Iraqi-UN stand-off, American officials scurry to the region.

But Iraq's latest decision to stop cooperation with UNSCOM is a clear sign of its frustration with the sanctions imposed by the United Nations since 1990, and this is realized by Arab states who themselves are showing little appetite for another military showdown.

The Iraqi government had felt that the 'oil for food' deal reached in 1996 was the beginning of the end for sanctions, but this was far from the truth. On the contrary, the deal has been used as a mechanism to perpetuate sanctions.

Today, for instance, the sanctions show no sign of being lifted, and this is why Iraq is making another stand. Earlier, it had challenged the UN inspectors, but eventually backed down at the intervention of UN Secretary General Kofi Annan. This time, however, nobody is quite sure how far Iraq will continue in its UN stand-off despite the US military preparation. Iraq feels that a stand is necessary to at least begin to dismantle the sanctions regime.

What is making Iraqis more angry is the fact that the 'oil for food' deal is being seen as "a good behavior exercise," as its implementation is conditional on being good to the UN inspectors. They can continue to receive limited food supplies so long as it is sanctioned by the high and mighty.

This is not an enviable position for Iraq to be under. Its like being held hos-

tage to a foreign body, whom you have no control over. UNSCOM has more power than people realize. Its boss, Richard Butler, makes regular visits to New York to report on the progress of inspections. In that respect, he is responsible for the perpetuation of the sanctions, because he feels that there is always more the Iraqis can give.

Although its role has never been questioned by the Security Council, UNSCOM is yet to find one single shred of evidence implicating Iraq of being involved in any nuclear, germ or biological warfare programs. Even independent inspectors and international agencies have been hard-pressed to find evidence of Iraqi irregular-

ities. Yet, despite this, the UN—and America in particular—are adamant that Iraq is stockpiling dangerous arms, regardless of what others may say.

How long can the US continue to force the issue? Iraq has endured eight grueling years of sanctions. The country and the people are being systematically destroyed, beaten and cajoled into surrender. So far, the main victims of the international sanctions have been the young, the old and the infirm.

What is worse, is that the world community is standing idly by, watching but turning a blind eye to the gross injustices committed in the name of international security! ■

Fishing in shallow waters

By Ehsan Nimri
Special to The Star

IF ANY action should have been taken it should be against Mr Mohammad Khalfah, the man who took part in last week's debate against Dr Kamel Abu Jaber in the popular television program, *Al Hijaah Al Mus'kes*, aired on the Al Jazeera satellite channel—or action could be against the program itself. The government should not have taken the drastic step of closing down the Amman office of the Qatari-based channel. The over-reaction was a step backwards, and could draw much controversy in a democratic country like Jordan.

Dr Abu Jaber was not in a position to give clear and sharp answers as an ex-foreign minister. The veteran politician should have given as good as he got during the debate.

Jordan's government and its leadership have strong commitments and determination towards peace and we must be proud of the civilization and democracy reached in such a short period, despite the uncertainties in the region.

The whole story was an escalation and over-reaction, blown out of all pro-

portion by the local media. The reaction should have been calmer and in the manner of a written formal reply, condemning the behavior of Mr Mohamed Khalfah and Faisal Al Qassem, the program's anchorman. Further, the government, and all Jordanians, should have taken a firm stand and boycotted the program and refused to participate in any of its future episodes.

Many feel that the closure of the office is a drastic one. Instead, the office could have been monitored more rigorously, ensuring that Jordan's point of view is put forward in a more balanced and positive way.

You just need to watch the debates inside the Israeli Knesset. Do you remember the live debate in Jordan during the Gulf War, when one MP hit the prime minister with his shoe while he was addressing parliament. Heated debates have led to boxing matches and abuse in parliaments all around the world. No TV channels have been ordered to close down for broadcasting these unfortunate incidents.

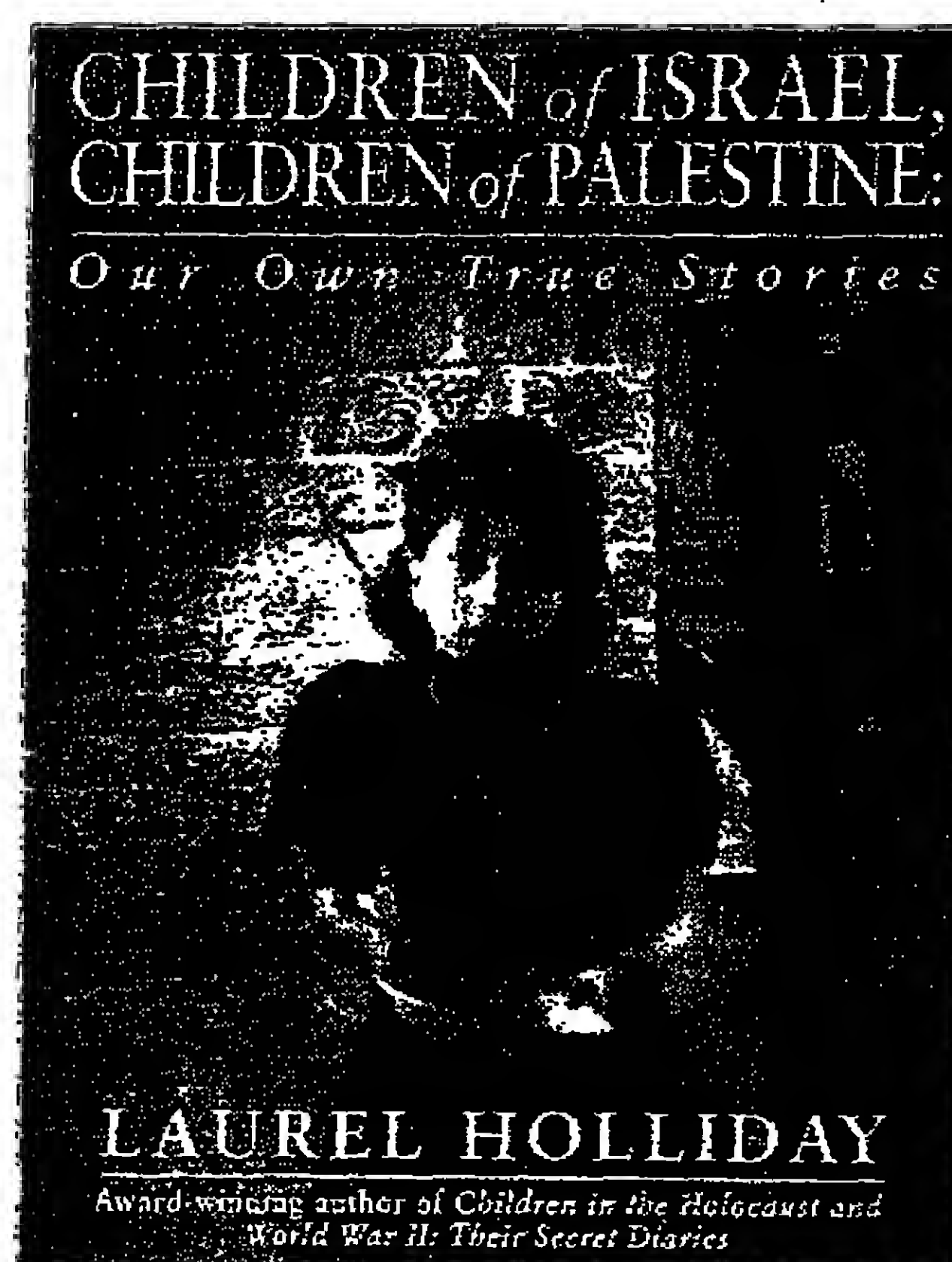
I think the comment during the short comical interlude by Hisham Yanees at the end of last Friday's Arabic news program "60 Minutes" summed up the situation perfectly. ■

Palestine/Israel through the eyes of children

Children of Israel, Children of Palestine: Our Own True Stories edited by Laurel Holliday, Pocket Books, ISBN: 0671008021, 1988, \$23.00, pp384

What is it like to grow up in the war zone of the Middle East? That is the subject of this disturbing collection, which begins with memories about childhood before the 1948 war, and ends with accounts of young Palestinians and Israelis growing up today. Some remember the rage for revenge ("I dreamed of killing each and every one of them"); many are overwhelmingly sad ("How painful to be a visitor in one's own country"). What connects them is a longing for peace. The question is, at what price? Holliday says in her eloquent introduction that there is no sweet upbeat solution of easy neutrality, no call "to kiss and make up," but there is hope in their agreeing to tell their stories in a book together. "They are listening to each other, and they make us hear all sides," writes Hazel Rochman in the Booklist.

Later the *Kirkus Reviews* had this to say about the book: "While limited in scope, this anthology of childhood memories of adults shaped by the Arab-Israeli wars is often quite moving. Like her previous books *Children of the Troubles: Our Lives in the Crossfire of Northern Ireland* (1997) and *Children of the Holocaust and World War II: Their Secret Diaries*, this volume anthologizes the eloquent testimonies



of adults remembering traumatic wartime incidents they witnessed as children. Holliday, a Seattle-based psychotherapist, has an eye for choosing telling details, including both the communal and dramatic (nightmarish scenes of Palestinians forced to flee their homes at night, watching as their houses are burned and leveled). The memoirs had to be written in English, somewhat limiting the range of contributors. Almost all of them express moderate views, thus offering a rather misleading portrait of Arab and Israeli societies, given the presence of violent extremists on both sides. While Holliday provides a sketchy history from the 19th century to the

present, we are not told the political reasons for the region's most pressing human problems, such as why houses in the Rafah refugee camp, like Ahmed Younis's, "were and still are made of one level of cinder block." Holliday's Israelis are often condescending in their treatment of Arabs, viewing them as "noble savages," illiterate, uncomplicated, easily led. Indeed, Ehud Ben-Ezer's colonialist father comes complete with a British "pith helmet." A powerful if somewhat incomplete sampling of voices, important especially for giving expression to those Palestinians whose stories are rarely heard.

In the book, Israeli Jews and Palestinians appear side by side for the first time to share powerful feelings and reflections on growing up in one of the world's longest and most dangerous conflicts. Here, thirty-six men and women, boys and girls, tell of their coming-of-age in a land of turmoil.

From kibbutzim in Israel and the Occupied Territories, to Palestinian refugee camps in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, from the Old City of Jerusalem to Ramallah to modern Tel Aviv, Israeli Jews and Palestinians tell of tragedy and transcendence as they face their deepest fears and dream of a peaceful future. Listen to them as they recount stories of their brief and often violent youth.

Haifa-born Yehudit Hendel remembers Jews and Arabs living together without hatred, and her own deep childhood connection with an aging Arab man, Musil Jamil Jaffer (a pseudonym) writes of his devastating childhood in a refugee camp.

Shammai Golan describes his own horrifying and painful encounter with death in the Israeli army. Basim Abdouad tells what it feels like to be a man without a country, as he searches for his Palestinian roots and finds he has no home to which he can return.

No matter what their ethnic identity, how much and how long they have suffered, these courageous autobiographers most often reveal a deep longing for peace. Perhaps their hopes and fears are best illustrated by a parable retold by eighteen-year-old Redrose (a pseudonym): "Two frogs got trapped in a jar of cream. They couldn't jump out of the liquid and they couldn't climb because the sides of the jar were slippery. One frog said, 'By dawn I'll be dead,' and went to sleep. The second frog swam all night long, and in the morning found herself floating on a pat of butter."

Food for thought

BOMBINGS, BOMBINGS and more bombings are the perfect excuse for Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his government to keep the negotiations on hold. As long as armed attacks continue to take place, Netanyahu can keep accusing the Palestinians of terrorism and the Palestinian Authority for not meeting their end of the deal. The question that immediately comes to mind, is who might benefit from such attacks?

It is definitely not the Palestinians, for the simple reason that with each bombing, the pressure increases on them to give more and more concessions at the expense of their people and land.

The Israeli government and its hardline Prime Minister Netanyahu benefit a lot from such terrorist attacks. The immediate benefit, for example, is the halt of all deals between them and the Palestinians. In the short-term, the latest Wye accord could be delayed giving the Israelis a

carte blanche to do what they please, with collective punishments and the building of settlements becoming the order of the day. Through these terrorist attacks, the Israeli government can prove to its people that the Palestinians can't be trusted in making any peace deals, something which will definitely have a very positive outcome for the Likud Party in the upcoming Israeli elections, a couple of years down the road.

Another question comes to mind: Is who is really behind these terrorist attacks? Initially the blame for the attack was on Hamas, but later it changed to Al Fatah Al Islami. This is fine, but the Israeli right-wing has been responsible for some of the attacks to sabotage deals with the Palestinians. If you need an example of this, take your mind back to the murder of former Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin, at the hands of a young Jewish extremist three years ago to be exact. ■

Samia Abu Shara

Middle East Beat by Khairi Jambek Silver-lining

NOW THAT the storm has subsided from the recent venomous satellite broadcast targeting Jordan's leadership and our country, we should reflect on what took place. When there isn't a crisis, a contrived one guarantees high ratings for TV channels, especially private ones who survive on selling advertisements.

In such institutions, the staff's intellectual prowess is only matched by the business acumen of the ad selling department. Intellect and money complement each other without resolving the emerging contradiction of seriousness and sensationalism. Though we are familiar with this western phenomenon, it seems that the Arab world is catching up with this latest method.

It would be absurd to think the modern history of Jordan can be altered by fallacies, and propaganda plays of a researcher. Research by students and specialists has always been unhindered and assisted by many publications on Jordan in different languages sold here and abroad. This was not the intention of that particular station. What was intended may well be found in the following short story: (During the Korean War of 1950-53, in an American Prisoners of War camp, a captured US Army Colonel approaches the North Korean Political Commissar of the camp and informs him that all those lectures on Marxism would not convert one single captured American GI. To which the Commissar answered that it was not his intention to do so, for he would consider himself extremely successful if he managed to make just a few of the American prisoners doubt their own system of government, and belief in their own country).

It is with the weapon of doubt that the Jordanian people are being fought, targeting the "most anti-social, and exclusionist elements in our society in the hope of turning them into the mouth-piece and muscle of treason. Probably we were misunderstood when we permitted ourselves the license of debating the composition of our population, origin, ethnic backgrounds, and religion. Though it does reflect the openness of our system and the confidence we feel, since all around us are monolithic systems of rule that oppress such issues by force of arms—those with malevolent intentions, have started thinking about opportunities to engender divisions and hatred in our society.

But even their clouds have silver-linings, and they have seen how Jordanians from all roots and origins have reacted to the insults against our whole being. We hope that all those with bad intentions see that our democracy is our strength, and that it binds us together by political pluralism.

We are a consensus society and very much protective of our collective Hashemite leadership, and the gains that our society has made over the years. Research centers and policy units, will continue with their statistics, and their own search of an identity for Jordan, but we have seen the real Hashemite identity of the Jordanian people. We have proved in real and practical way, the fallacies of abstract academic identity constructions and statistics.

We continue on our path of disregarding the envious. We still have hard tasks ahead of us, as very soon the final status negotiations between our Palestinian brethren and the Israelis will commence, and with it our role must be activated to take our seats at the making of history and the establishment of a just and comprehensive peace.

There is no doubt, that Jordan should partake in the final status negotiations, and must be represented in all the discussions, which are vital for Jordan in as much as they are important for the PNA and the Israelis. There is no need to remind the world that the questions of refugees, water, secure borders, and Jerusalem, are of concern to us as well. ■

هكنا من الرخيل

Business scene

Intensive talks were held last week between the World Bank and the Jordanian government, and included officials from the Ministries of Finance, Planning and Trade and Industry. The talks followed a recent report by the World Bank on Jordan's economic position. The World Bank delegation was headed by Kamal Darwish, the assistant director of the Bank.

A special seminar on business cooperation will take place in Amman on 18 November, under the auspices of the Vocational Training Corp (VTC). It will look into the regulations and automation of business relations between corporations and the concerned employers. The seminar will also discuss offering VTC facilities, like security and safety measures, economic guidance and business consultation. About 4200 employers from both the private and public sectors are currently cooperating with the VTC.

Germany is considered the highest aid-donor to Jordan after the United States. According to an official German paper, Germany is extending help to the Jordanian government in development and economic cooperation. Such cooperation is especially apparent in funding water projects. Germany sees Jordan as a main center for tourism and cultural investment.

Joint talks between Jordan, the US, and Israel will be held this weekend at Irbid Industrial City. The main goal behind these meetings is to activate the joint agreement for the qualified industrial zones in Israel and Jordan.

The Middle East Technology Exhibition is now open. The public event was opened under the patronage of King Hussein bin Abdullah II. The exhibition, with a banner of "Year 2000, the two-digit problem," over 40 companies, from Jordan and abroad, are displaying their latest productions of Information Technology. The exhibition, which is the 9th to be held by the Jordanian Computer Society, lasts until tomorrow (Friday) 13 November.

Foreign Exchange

Wednesday, 11 November 1998

| | Buy JD | Sell JD |
|------|--------|---------|
| US\$ | 0.7080 | 0.7100 |
| UK£ | 1.1510 | 1.1508 |
| DM | 0.4124 | 0.4145 |
| FRF | 0.4801 | 0.4825 |
| ITL | 0.1227 | 0.1233 |
| YEN | 0.5624 | 0.5652 |
| HK\$ | 0.3667 | 0.3685 |
| INR | 0.0419 | 0.0421 |

Trade Chamber elections

Nominees outline their economic policies

By Ghassan Joha
Star Staff Writer

A NEW council for the Amman Chamber of Commerce will be formed this week. The scheduled elections are due to take place on 17 November, and will be the last of its kind this century, as the new board will conduct the chamber up until the year 2002.

In all, 28 traders and businessmen are hoping to be nominated for the new chamber. The majority of the nominees are divided into two blocs of 12 members each—Al Wifaq (Concord bloc) and Al Ta'awun (Cooperation bloc). The other four nominees have registered as independents. The competition is fierce, as there are only 12 positions on the board.

The current President of the Amman Chamber, Haider Murad, heads Al Wifaq bloc, while Riyadh Sayfi presides over Al Ta'awun. Both blocs called the elections "decisive for the Jordanian trade sector." Jordanian traders, on their part, are preparing themselves for the challenges of the new millennium. Economic analysts say that the Jordanian economy is moving backwards, due to the suspension of the Middle East peace process and the



Haider Murad



Riyadh Sayfi

UN embargo on Iraq. Both factors are having a negative effect on the private sector, and the national economy in general.

Most of Al Ta'awun members have called for more economic measures to increase the level of local commercial investment, which would benefit the interests of the local population. They also urged the government to provide greater vocational training

or the workforce, and for more control over foreign labor to safeguard positions for Jordanians.

The members also called for further study on the effects of customs and taxes on manufactured goods. Both blocs have agreed that the government should take a more active role in clearing the local market from impurities. False checks were one such impurity, as too many people are writing checks

focusing on the fields of tourism, health, and agriculture in particular.

The Wifaq bloc, meanwhile, placed Arab interests at the top of their agenda, and said that if they were elected, they would make the Arab common market their sole objective. They also urged the government to reduce the bank interest rates, as they were too high at the moment and are restricting the level of investment in the Kingdom.

Other proposals put forward by the Wifaq bloc were greater economic regulations to promote investment in the country, and to relinquish taxes on car spare parts which has affected the local car market for too long.

The Wifaq bloc also called on the government to make Aqaba port its main center for importing and exporting goods, rather than using the Haifa port in Israel.

These elections are considered vital for the future of the trading sector in Jordan, as the 12 elected members will be responsible for the coordination of the economic policies within the Kingdom, liaising with the government's economic team.

Spanish investors target Jordan

A GROUP of Spanish investors made a special visit to Jordan last week. This came in accordance with the economic cooperation between Spain and Jordan, and showed the potential for foreign investment in the Kingdom.

During their tour, the group signed a special agreement to hold the first Spanish Industrial Exhibition in Amman, due to be held in March 1999. About 700 Spanish businessmen will participate in the exhibit, representing over 315 factories and economic institutions in Spain.

The Spanish experts studied the prospects of building economic and industrial projects in Jordan. The group were informed by the chairman of the Amman Trade Chamber, Haider Murad, of the current Jordanian means to promote foreign investment.

Press reports mentioned earlier this month that Spanish investors were considering the foundation of a special Spanish-funded project in the pharmaceutical industry sector. The investors have discussed the possibility of building a large factory for exporting medical products abroad.

Investors expressed hope that these projects will come to fruition next year, and that the two countries would establish a new permanent Arab-Spanish commercial center. To add to the good news, the Stanford Institute for Economic Research said that Jordan's investment rating was the highest in the region.



The Spanish delegation visits Ad Dustour. Photo by Salah Malkawi



Inflight Service of the Royal Jordanian, gets the ISO 9002

ROYAL JORDANIAN Airlines was granted the ISO 9002 certificate from the TÜV Germany, through its agents the Naouri Group. The Inflight Services Department of the national carrier being the pioneer department within this vital organization acting as a model for other departments to follow in providing excellent services.

The Royal Jordanian Airlines chose TÜV Management services for its international experience in performing audits and for its leading position among companies offering such services.

TÜV specializes in providing services in the fields of quality, environment and safety. Ibrahim Naouri, chairman of the board and general manager of Near East Inspection Company (NEIC), expressed his delight and satisfaction of this latest achievement. He added that the certification audit was performed by a team of auditors headed by a German lead auditor with two other sub-auditors. The department was audited to establish conformity



to the international standards, and to specific requirements of the Joint Aviation Authority (JAA). These requirements are internationally implemented and especially required for the airlines operations in Europe and the United States. Mr Naouri elaborated that TÜV services has recently begun the certification procedure for the German carrier Lufthansa, after already certified in all fields around the world, in which makes TÜV services one of the global leaders in providing ISO

9000 certification services. After sensing the benefits behind such certification, the group decided to represent one of the world's prominent giants in the field, hence was the inception of NEIC, extending high-rank services of the TÜV in Jordan and neighboring countries.

Worth mentioning is that the NEIC has worked on granting 16 ISO 9000 certificates to outstanding companies in Jordan alone.

Moreover, TÜV builds long

term relationships with its customers based on professional and high-quality services in pioneering fields, being the first certification body to certify in the Middle East.

Mr Naouri finalized that the group, with its different companies, operates in various fields ranging from shipping and transport, to ISO certification and cargo inspection and they all provide excellent services fitting the reputation of the represented international institutions.

Mr Naouri

Africa in crisis

Has western development failed?

By Jean-Marc Ela

FEW STUDIES about Africa leave much room for hope. We read that Africa is collapsing and turning into 'a school for the ill of humanity.' The image of a shipwrecked continent seems to sum up the perception of Africa-synonymous with poverty, corruption and fraud; the home of violence, conflict and genocide. We are assailed with apocalyptic images of an impoverished Africa in a spiral of conflict. As the century draws to a close, we are told that no continent offers such a spectacle of desolation, war and famine as Africa. Slowly, the place is going to the dogs.

The paradigm of bankruptcy has become the context for every analysis of modern Africa's economic and social history, with the stress on the blind alleys of what is conventionally termed development. As Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch remarks, "we are in a period of cumulative crisis," which she defines both as a crisis in the processes of development in the Southern hemisphere and a crisis of a world where interdependence is fast becoming inescapable. A crisis in the development models and ideologies underlying countries' policies and structures. A crisis of know-how as the fields of development break up and theory proves to be out of step with poorly analysed reality. Samir Amin evokes the same general picture: "The 1960s were marked by the great hope that we were at the start of an irreversible process of development throughout the third world, and especially Africa. But ours has become the age of disenchantment. Development is at a standstill, its theory is in crisis, its ideology in doubt. It is generally agreed that development in Africa is bankrupt."

And yet, was the decolonization of the 1960s not to have been the harbinger of progress? Was not the green revolution supposed to put an end to famine? Was it not the aim of the aid organizations to promote 'integrated,' 'autocentric,' 'endogenous,' 'participatory,' 'community' development? How many destitute regions, now the vast graveyards of projects and programmes costing billions of dollars, have seen streams of 'cooperators,' 'experts' or 'technical assistants,' advice to Africa having become something of an industry?

Pessimism about Africa is standing in the way of any political analysis of the problems of development. It constantly diverts Western opinion by reproducing the stereotypes of colonial ethnology. In these days of all-pervading revisionism, it is no doubt convenient to remove any reference to the structures and effects of domination. But they are with us again, nevertheless, as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank strangle Africa, forcing it to dismantle its production systems and its states. Georges Balandier rightly says that "the powerlessness of the third world is maintained by the inequalities and dependence on which those countries base their power and, for the time being, hold on to it."

As if to stifle the debate on the violence caused by the increasing role of money in African societies, barrack-room anthropologists are going back to the old litany of cultural obstacles to development: if the producers of cocoa, coffee, groundnuts, cotton or bananas are so poor, it is because they insist on clinging to their ancestral beliefs; while the urban managerial classes go on submitting to commu-

nity pressures which, through kinship obligations, stop them making any savings or productive investments. More crudely, some go back to the climate theory to explain Africa's 'backwardness' or 'helplessness'. Others, with the spectre of Malthus haunting international financial institutions, go so far as to blame the poor themselves for having too many children, making women and families the targets of population policy. By taking account of the interaction between population, development and the environment, the neoliberal debate on the African economic crisis also resorts to the 'regressive spiral' theory of poverty, which links population growth to environmental degradation.

Of course, responsibility for the continent's ills cannot be placed at the door of external factors alone: Africa is also 'sick of itself.' One need only mention the organized plundering by the ruling classes who, as in Cameroon, for example, actually make corruption a method of government. Or the practices whereby the state redistributes resources to its supporters using predatory methods that have brought many African countries to ruin. And there is no hiding the power of the mafia-like networks and sundry lobbies that control strategic resources and uphold corrupt dictatorships.

Most of the wars and conflicts that have ceaselessly impoverished Africa can only be understood in the context of the geopolitical stakes and strategic economic resources fought over by powerful interest groups: oil, uranium, copper, diamonds, cobalt, gold or aluminium. Such takeovers and interventions are the stock in trade of socio-political systems where the ruling classes manipulate ethnicity as part of their strategy of conquest or seizing power. One need only look at the political economy of Africa's mineral resources, now caught up in the conflictual dynamics of globalization. In the same way, the continent's pauperization is inseparable from the criminalization of the state and the economy at a time when the IMF and World Bank are using debt as a weapon to weaken the state and force Africans to embrace the religion of the market.

Since the end of the second world war, notes Georges Balandier, "the third world countries' own theories of development have been first of all modelled on external theories: those formed and tested in so-called advanced societies and which are now being called into question." Those theories were developed from a pattern of social change peculiar to the specific paths taken by Western societies that claim a monopoly on modernity. It is a point of view that says that African societies can only reproduce the model of the societies that are trying to modernize them. In order to 'succeed', they have not been asked to innovate using their own internal dynamics or to steer change in line with their own frames of reference.

In African societies, the truly poor person is the one who has no kindred: the family spirit and the principle of reciprocity underpin economic ties within the mesh of social relationships. Given the weight of this social and cultural framework, Africans tend to distance themselves from a development model in which socio-economic inequalities are considered one of the real engines of progress. They question an economic modernization that involves the destruction of social ties.

In Africa's villages and neighborhoods where there is so much decay, anonymous players are however demonstrating the

inventiveness of these societies and their ability to innovate in the face of the mechanisms of impoverishment. The failure of a single development model must not be allowed to hide the new dynamism that has appeared in many African countries since the 1970s: rural communities organizing themselves; experiments in local development and collective advancement; social movements in urban areas; local enterprises triggering bursts of industrialization; people finding their own voice, creating a private press, defending their societies against the state; the birth and spread of communities of researchers, scientists, thinkers, writers and artists of international repute.

The scope of these changes means we must take a fresh look at the real economy in these societies.

The capacity for innovation, reinvention of traditions and resurgence of native skills are these societies' responses to the tightening of structural constraints and the demands of unbribed capitalism. More than just a means of 'getting by', these popular practices are the concrete manifestations of a society and economy rooted in local culture. Friendly societies form a 'total services' system where people can exchange not only money and work, but also meals, rites, especially mourning, friendship obligations and advice. Access to economic modernity is not therefore incompatible with the forging of links between money and kinship.

In fact, the rebirth of associations in sub-Saharan Africa is resulting in experiments in cooperative development. In a situation where programs drawn up by experts are based on supposedly scientific assumptions affirming the universality of the category *homo economicus* as opposed to *homo africanus*, these experiments must be seen as a genuine alternative to the building of a new barbarian economy on the ruins of society. The forms of creativity that are spreading on the margins of the dominant system by means of a kind of 'intelligence of cunning' are a means of subverting the Western system of development. Africans, possessed of an imagination far removed from the Washington consensus, are thus organizing a break with the logic of violence and exclusion inherent in the ethos that the West is seeking to impose on the whole of the planet. Their many-sided tactics and strategies, 'deviant' forms of behavior, are a sign of the vitality and renaissance of African societies and cultures. These grass-roots practices without a doubt make Africa the continent that is best resisting the levelling that is going on in the world.

Africa is not against development. It dreams of other things than the expansion of a culture of death or an alienating modernity that destroys the fundamental values so dear to Africans. At the same time Africa wants to be part to all the developments of the approaching end of century. Which will make it the continent of the future. Africa sees further than an all-embracing world of material things and the dictatorship of the here and now, that insists on trying to persuade us that the only valid motto is 'I sell, therefore I am'. In a world often devoid of meaning, Africa is a reminder that there are other ways of being.

Business Chronicle

The new Trade and Industry Law

THE NEW Trade and Industry Law came into effect at the beginning of this month. The new law terminates the old Ministry of Supply, forming a new body that will coordinate its activities under the auspices of the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Ahmed Assaf, assistant to the general director of the Ministry of Trade, told the press that his Ministry will now be responsible for the supply of goods, and the control of prices, and that the performance of this new department will depend how well the two ministries combine. The unification will mean that all financial, legal, and administrative development, as well as the conduct of international economic relations and the commercial register, will now be under the control of the Ministry of Trade and Industry.

Mr Assaf said that the Ministry's new responsibilities have been specified in certain articles of the new law. He confirmed that all of the 1700 employees from the Ministry of Supply will be joining the current 250 employees at the Ministry of Trade and Industry. The responsibility for a strategic reserve of essential food products, the control of product prices, and maintenance of the current health regulations regarding food, will also be handed over to the new department.

The new law contains 24 articles, of which 18 are from the old Supply Law and are still in effect. The Ministry, however, now has the power to control the internal and external exchange of products, as well as the supervision of all national markets. New trade agreements and accords with foreign countries will also be supervised by the Ministry of Trade.

A special record called 'the commercial record,' will also be implemented, overlooking the import and export of all trade products. The law also allows the government to fix the prices of these trade products, and their means of advertising. However, the penalties and fines under the old Supply Law have been adopted by the new law, and so are still enforceable.

Mr Assaf concluded that a new list of regulations will be issued by the Minister of Trade, so as to clarify all the rules regarding the new law.

The Dead Sea, the Legend

By Ehsan Nimri
Special to The Star

SODOM LAKE, Dead Sea, the Saline Lake, are all different names for the same place. Several communities and civilizations have originated there, and have been washed away, in the area known today as the Dead Sea.

Situated 55 kilometers west of Amman, the Dead Sea is the lowest point on earth, 400 meters below sea level. Coming down from the mountains of Amman, you will notice the change in the atmospheric pressure. As you approach the Dead Sea an overpowering feeling overwhelms you. Under the blazing sun, the beach conjures up a marvelous view. It is a seducing scene. The viewer is surrounded by the white salty rocks of the Dead Sea waters.

Swimming in the Dead Sea is not dangerous. You don't even need to know how to swim. You can read the newspaper or have a drink, whilst floating in the water without any fear of sinking. You can feel the intensity of the Dead Sea when leaving the water; your body is covered with a salty slime. This is due to the density of the Dead Sea water, which is four times as dense as that of other sea water. One liter of this contains 370 grams of salt, compared to the ocean's average of 40 grams. The world's saltiest and deepest natural lake is 400 meters deep.

The Dead Sea area was formed as a result of plate tectonics: the movement of the great plates under the lithosphere, the rigid outermost shell of the earth. The Dead Sea itself was formed approximately 12,000 years ago. It is an amazing natural phenomenon, covering an area of 1,000 square kilometers, with a reservoir of 44 billion tons of highly concentrated dissolved salts.

The composition of the Dead Sea by weight is as follows: water 72.50%, magnesium chloride 14.50%, sodium chloride 7.50%, calcium chloride 7.50%, potassium chloride 1.20%, magnesium chloride 0.50%, a minuscule amount of sulphur and is free

from carbonates. Salts extracted from the Dead Sea are pure and of good quality.

Scientific explorations of the Dead Sea began in the early 19th century. The most successful expedition was led by Captain W.F. Lynch in 1848, to explore and survey the Dead Sea and

ful as his first book. As a consequence of Lynch's work, overseas expeditions funded by governments and private bodies intensified in the Dead Sea.

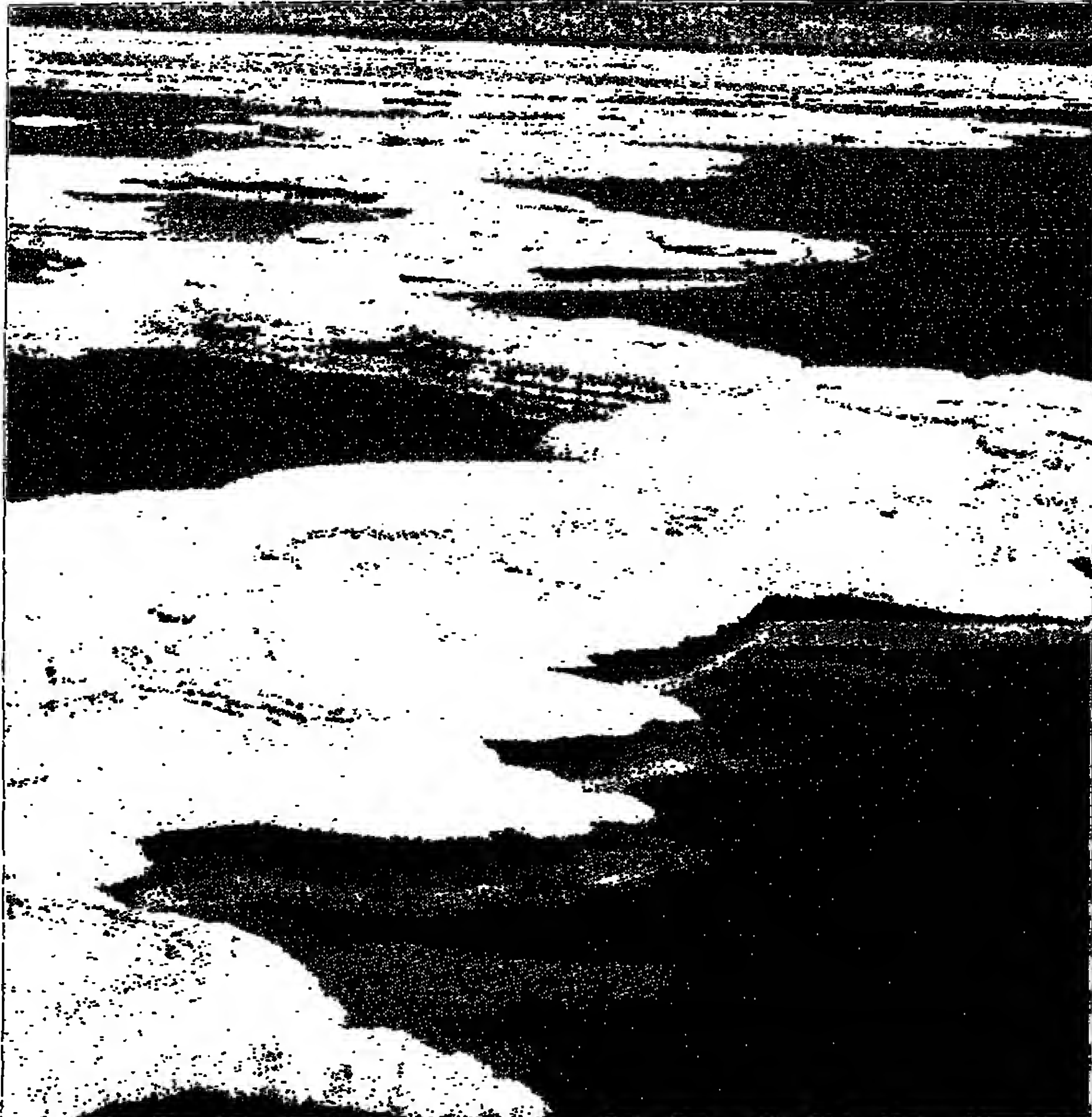
Since 1890, potassium has been used to make soap, glass, matches and explosives. With the advent of chemical fertilizers, the demand for mineral

up to 2.2 million tons annually. Salt extraction is used in manufacturing of glass, drugs, textiles, paint, food, fertilizers, explosives, cement, photography, dyes, cosmetics, and soap. Potash is one of the main exports of Jordan, and is mainly used for fertilizers. Potassium, when treated as a fertilizer, gives essential nutrients to crops, which can enhance growth and taste.

The high quality of the potash and other salts obtained from the Dead Sea are marketed locally and internationally as cosmetic and health care products. In Jordan, Al Mawared Natural Beauty Products Corporation is one of the companies which markets these products. It launched its operation in 1996, and manufactures health care products, with a capital of \$7,000,000 and a workforce of 70 well trained employees. Under the trademark of 'Rivage', the company is equipped with the state of the art technology.

Soap made from the natural oils and enriched minerals of the Dead Sea is used to remove dead skin cells and softens the skin, while the black mud soap is good for oily skin. A face pack from the mud of the Dead Sea, is an excellent way to smooth the skin. Hand creams, shampoos, make up removers, night and day cream, mineral deodorants, and Dead Sea bath crystals are other products on the market. In all, there are 85 products on the market containing 280 natural elements and minerals. Rivage marketing manager, Mr. Adel Al-Qasbi, President of the Board of Directors, says that the company has a wide market in the region, but is currently looking to add new markets in America and Canada.

However, will the Dead Sea—the mystery, legend, and jewel of all jewels—last forever, or will it decline with time and too much intensive production? Despite all the benefits that have been accrued from the Dead Sea, this question needs to be tendered to all scientists and experts, as well as the organizations concerned in preserving nature. Let us hope that we are not the generation that signs the death sentence to this natural wonder.



the Jordan River. In his expedition, Lynch and his team concentrated on the configuration, depth and chemical composition of the Dead Sea, which the results are still used today. Lynch also collected mineral, biological and water samples from the Dead Sea to be analyzed. The first publication of his research ('Narrative') was published in 1849, and was republished in seven languages. He was the first to recommend the large-scale commercial exploitation of the Dead Sea. Lynch also published 'Commerce and the Holy Land', which was just as successful

salts, like potassium, increased rapidly worldwide.

The Pan Arab Company was formed in 1965 to extract and utilize Dead Sea minerals, but due to uncertainties at that time the plan was shelved. In 1983, the Arab Potash Company (APC) launched its operations with an initial capacity of 1.2 million tons. The company has an execution concession from the government up to the year 2056, and is equipped with the most advanced technology, and has a workforce of 2300 personnel. APC has three new plants bringing production

Arab Americans protest stereotypes in 'The Siege'

By Sharon Waxman

LOS ANGELES—To understand the objections of Arab Americans and Muslims to 20th Century Fox's new film 'The Siege', which opened last week around the US, picture the following scenario: A nefarious rabbi exhorts his extremist, ultra-Orthodox followers to plant bombs against Arab sympathizers in America. Innocents are killed and maimed. The FBI starts rounding up Orthodox Jews and putting them in camps.

Or how about this: A Catholic priest has molested an altar boy. The church refuses to hand him and other offenders over to police. The FBI starts rounding up clerics in an attempt to ferret them out.

These provocative story lines—unlikely, perhaps, but not entirely implausible—would certainly spark an outcry from Jewish and Catholic interest groups. The question is: Would Hollywood choose to portray them in the first place?

'The Siege', a thriller about Muslim terrorists who wreak mayhem in New York, feeds into American stereotypes about Arabs and Muslims that have long been reinforced by Hollywood. But ironically, 'The Siege' has the opposite intention. The film invokes the terrorist image to debunk it. It takes pains to portray a sympathetic, patriotic Arab American, played by Lebanese American Tony Shalhoub, and explores what happens to innocent bystanders (such as an Arab American who gets tortured to death) when the military tramples over civil rights in the name of security.

But American Arabs and Muslims are not convinced. "This movie participates fully in the linking of Arab culture and Islamic religious practices and terrorism. That's nothing new," says Hussein Ishih, the

can society responds to a threat. Its rampant use of discriminatory stereotypes is very dangerous for our community."

The problem for Ishih and other groups such as the Council on American Islamic Relations—which will be leafletting theaters in Washington, Los Angeles and Chicago this weekend—is the clash between the movie's stated message and its subliminal images. "The characters say one thing but the cinematic language conveys an entirely different message in its imagery," says Ishih. "And in the movie theater the language of cinema trumps everything else." As examples, he points to ominous music that accompanies a camera shot pulling back from a mosque in Brooklyn, or the repeated image of two hands dipped into a pool of water—the allusion before prayer—as a signal for imminent violence.

"The movie criticizes the institutional measures the government takes against innocent people, but it doesn't criticize the misunderstanding of the faith that the movie reinforces," says Nihad Awad, the executive director of the Islamic council, who consulted with 'Siege' director Ed Zwick during the making of the film. "It's as if it says, 'These are criminals, these filthy Arabs and Muslims, but still we should not shed the Constitution. We are higher than that.'"

Zwick and the movie's producer, Lynda Obst, as well as screenwriter Lawrence Wright, express frustration with the reaction, saying that the advocacy groups have missed the point. "If their premise is that any depiction of the life of a Muslim that includes a depiction of violence, no matter how well documented, is offensive, then they cannot but be upset with the film," Zwick says. "I believe that is their premise."

Wright, who lived in Egypt for two years and has written about the Middle East for the New Yorker, says, "I think they see it with different eyes than I do. In many respects they may be oversensitive and anxious about movies because of their past treatment in Hollywood. But it seems paradoxical to me that they would center on a movie that has their concern so much at its heart."

In some ways the protest over 'The Siege', despite the film's noble intentions, shows how very vulnerable the American Muslim community feels as a minority caught in the shadow of real-life Islamic terrorism. The Islamic council and the ADC spend most of their time documenting incidents of discrimination and arguing against harassment of Arabs and Muslims by airlines and other companies. They have made, they say, some progress in sensitizing American society to their concerns. But they don't think they have in Hollywood. Says Awad, "I don't want to believe that there is a political agenda there, although many people see it that way. But there is a serious level of ignorance about Islam in Hollywood." Ishih complains that a ceremony in the film featuring the adolescent son of Shalhoub's character does not exist in Islam, and Awad objected to Shalhoub's drinking of alcohol (forbidden to traditional Muslims) and his exclamation of "Jesus Christ!" when something remarkable happens.

Zwick removed the exclamations, and also took Awad's suggestion to delete a tense exchange between Denzel Washington's character, the FBI chief, and an Arab taxi driver who refuses to pick him up. But he declined to comply with Awad's request to change the plot of the movie (they were already halfway through

Hollywood films, from movie-of-the-week hijack dramas to the reality-based films like 'Not Without My Daughter' to the overly fantastic caricatures in 'Raiders of the Lost Ark', 'Navy SEALs', 'The Delta Force' and, most recently, the Arnold Schwarzenegger blow-out 'True Lies', in which snarling Arabs threaten to nuke America to pieces.

There is a reason for this, of course. Since the 1970s many terrorist acts were perpetrated by Arab radicals, and in the past decade and a half terrorism has become a weapon used by fundamentalist Islamic extremists. The plot in 'The Siege' mirrors the real-life story of fundamentalists who tried to blow up the World Trade Center, down to a plot twist involving the CIA. "This is being repeated as though it's not legitimate to portray religious Islamic groups intent on bombing America," says producer Obst. "We read about it in the newspaper."

Indeed, in an era of galloping political correctness, it has become increasingly difficult to come up with movie villains who do not offend one constituency or another. The Native American has been pretty much extinct as a screen menace for at least a decade. With the collapse of the Soviet Union, a desperate Hollywood has turned to aliens ('Independence Day', 'Alien Resurrection'), 'Outbreak' and dinosaurs ('The Lost World: Jurassic Park') to provide credible, and unobjectionable, enemies.

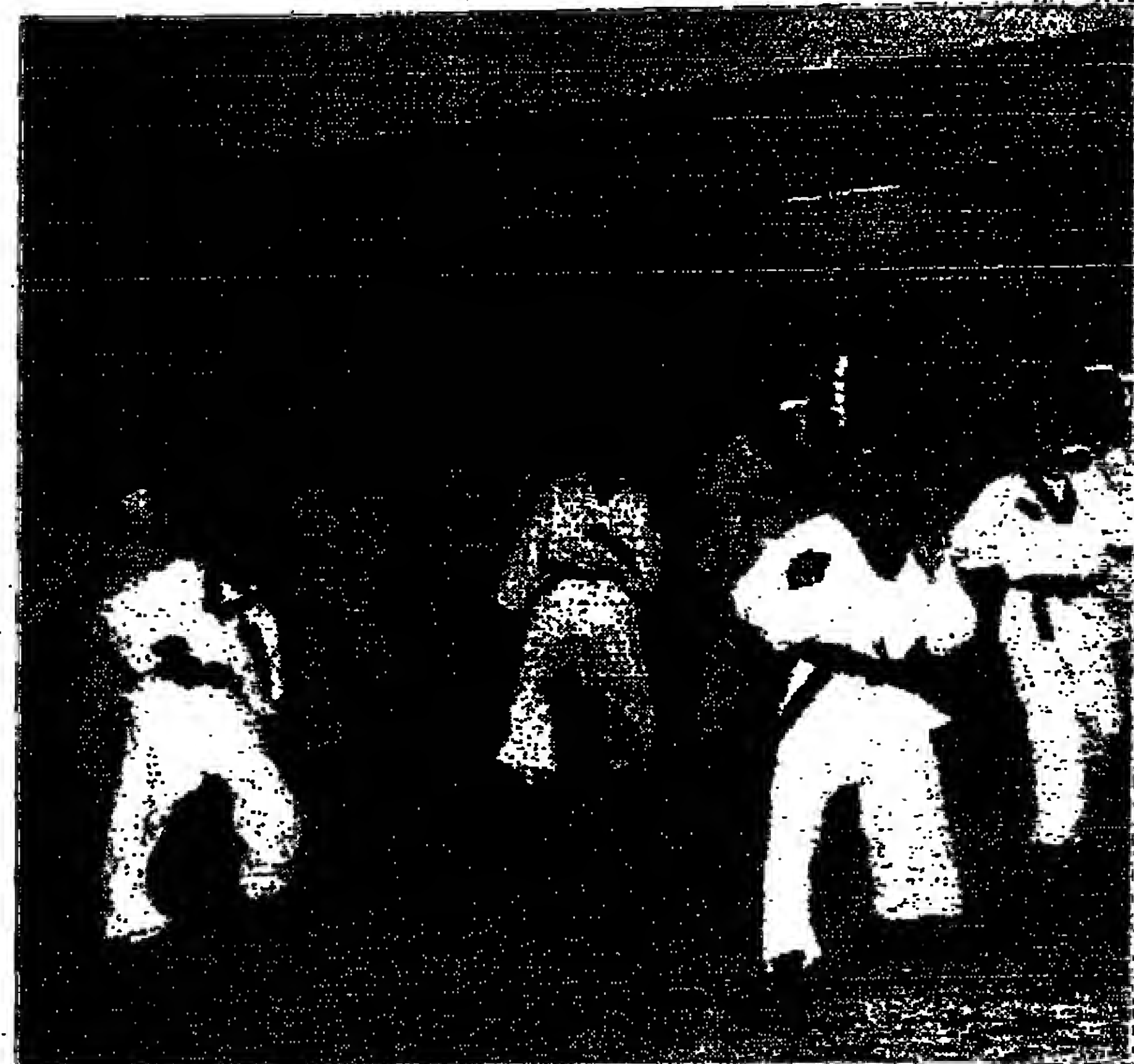
For villains of the Homo sapiens variety, Hollywood has recently turned to Serbs ('The Peacemaker') and rogue madmen of the ex-Soviet republics ('Air Force One') as bad guys unlikely to have many advocates in the United States.

vibrant minority in America," he says. "But they too have to deal with some very contradictory realities, one of which is that a fringe, fanatic, violent minority has engaged in terror."

But the problem with depicting this on a 10-foot screen, say Ishih, Awad and others, is that there may be consequences to innocent and non-cinematic Arab American bystanders. "We really are concerned that this could result in hate crimes. I hope I'm wrong," says Ishih. "It may be true that they tried to make a movie that debunked racism, but they did it at the expense of Arabs and Muslims." Says Awad: "We have been slapped on both cheeks for so long that if they kiss us on one cheek, should we thank them for that? I recognize that there are some positive images in the film. But I can't settle for that."

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

History of Karate



By Tala Abu Tala
Star Staff Writer

KARATE HAS been around for over a thousand years now. Legend has it that it began in the fifth century BC, when Badhidharma arrived in Shaolin-st (small forest temple), China, from India and started to teach Zen Buddhism, and introduced a systematized set of exercises designed to strengthen the mind and body—exercises which allegedly marked the beginning of the shaolin style of temple boxing. Badhidharma's teachings later became the basis for the majority of Chinese martial arts that we know of today.

In truth, however, the origins of Karate appear to be shrouded in doubt, and the first historical recording of the martial art took place in Okinawa—a small island among many islands that comprises modern-day Japan. It is the main island in the chain of Ryukyu Islands, which spans from Japan to Taiwan. Surrounded by coral, Okinawa is approximately 10 kilometers wide. It is situated 740 kilometers east of mainland China, and 550 kilometers south of mainland Japan, and an equal distance north of Taiwan.

Being at the crossroads of major trading routes, its significance as a "resting spot" was first discovered by the Japanese. It later developed as a trade center for southeast Asia, with trading between Japan, China, Indo-China, Thailand, Malaysia, Borneo and the Philippines.

In the earliest stages, the martial art known as "karate" was an indigenous form of closed fist fighting developed in Okinawa and called Te, or "hand." Weapons were banned for the Okinawans at various points in their history, and this encouraged the refinement of hand only techniques. Further refinement of techniques were made over the centuries, brought to the island by nobles and trade merchants.

To continue to develop over the years, primarily in three Okinawan cities: Shuri, Naha and Tomari. All three of these towns were the center of a particular sect of society: King and Nobles, merchants and business people, and farmers and fishermen, respectively. For this reason, different forms of self-defense developed within each city, and they subsequently became known as Shuri-te, Naha-te and Tomari-te. Collectively they were known as Okinawa-Te or Tode, "Chinese hand."

Gradually, Karate was divided into two main groups. Shorin-ryu which developed around Shuri and Tomari, and Shorei-ryu which came from the Naha area. It is important to note that the towns of Shuri, Tomari, Naha are only a few miles apart and that the differences between their arts were essentially ones of emphasis, not of kind. Essentially, the methods and aims of all Okinawan karate are one in the same.

Gichin Funakoshi goes further, suggesting that the two styles were developed on different physical requirements. Shorin-ryu was quick and linear with natural breathing, while Shorei-ryu emphasized steady, rooted movements with breathing in synchrony with each movement. Interestingly, two basic

styles existed in early kung-fu as well, with similar characteristics.

In the Chinese script, the character used to write Tode could also be pronounced "kara." Thus, the name Te was replaced with Kara—just su or "Chinese hand art" by the Okinawan Masters. This was later changed to Karate—do by Gichin Funakoshi, who adopted an alternate meaning for the Chinese character "kara," which means empty. From this point on, the term karate came to mean "empty hand." The "do" in Karate-do means "way" or "path," and is indicative of the discipline and philosophy of karate, employing moral and spiritual connotations.

The first public karate demonstration was by Gichin Funakoshi, and took place at the Butoku-den in Kyoto, Japan, in 1917. Subsequent demonstrations greatly impressed the Crown Prince Hirohito, who was very enthusiastic about the Okinawan art. In 1922, Dr. Jimo Kano—founder of the Japanese art of Judo—invited Funakoshi to make a demonstration at the famous Kodokan school of Judo. He remained in Japan to teach Karate, and he was instrumental in establishing a base for Karate in Japan. As an Okinawan "peasant art," Karate would have been scorned by the Japanese if it wasn't for the backing of this formidable martial arts master.

Today, there are four main styles of Karate-do in Japan—Goju-ryu, Shito-ryu, Shotokan and Wado-ryu.

Goju-ryu developed out of Naha-te, and its popularity was due to the success of Kanyo Higashina. The emphasis is placed on combining soft circular blocking techniques with fast, powerful counter attacks delivered in rapid succession.

Shito-ryu was founded by Kenwa Mabumi in 1928, and was influenced directly by both Naha-te and Shorin-ryu. Shito-ryu schools used a large number of kata, and were characterized by an emphasis on power when executing the techniques.

Shotokan was founded by Gichin Funakoshi in Tokyo in 1938. Shotokan karate is characterized by powerful linear techniques and wide, strong stances.

Wado-ryu—"way of harmony"—was founded in 1939, and was developed from jujitsu and karate by Hienori Otsuka. This style of karate combines the basic movements of jujitsu with the techniques of evasion, putting a strong emphasis on softness and harmony, and the concept of spiritual discipline.

In Jordan, karate is well-known, but a lot more education is still needed. Karate can accentuate human values, increase your self-confidence, and respect of your opponent, give balance and self control, and the ability to exceed one's expectations.

The main reason why Karate is so popular among the youth of Jordan, both male and female, is due to the emphasis given to the philosophical and esoteric side of the sport—the spiritual side if you like, and with an ever increasing participation world-wide, the teachings of Karate are guaranteed to be past onto future generations. ■

Code-share agreement signed with Emirates

BRITISH AIRWAYS and Emirates signed a code-share agreement covering selected flights between Britain and the United Arab Emirates (UAE), offering travellers a wider choice of services and destinations. The agreement is subject to government approval.

As the agreement will go into effect on 1 December, British Airways Regional Director of UK, Middle East and Africa said, "It is excellent news for air travellers flying between Europe and the Middle East, offering greater flexibility across the unmatched networks of two leading airlines committed to the highest levels of customer service."

one which does not currently form part of the new code-share agreement between British Airways and Emirates. The code-share agreement will allow British Airways to operate flights from Heathrow to Abu Dhabi, and vice versa, via Bahrain.

The scheduled flights between Heathrow and Abu Dhabi will be operated by British Airways Boeing 777-300ER aircraft, BA077/BA078 from Heathrow, and BA072/BA071 from Abu Dhabi. Passengers from Abu Dhabi will have smooth connections onto flights to the 180 other destinations served by the British Airways fleet from Heathrow.

Flight services between Manchester and Dubai will also be operated daily by Emirates Airbus A380 aircraft. The

extensive Middle Eastern network of Dubai.

Beginning in 1999, Emirates plans to operate Airbus A330-300 from Manchester on the same route. Seating up to 285 passengers, the two-class configuration offers Emirates standard flight facilities, such as in-seat TV screens in all cabins, in-flight phones and fax machines.

Emirates will introduce a no-smoking policy on all its flights between Dubai and Manchester, as soon as the code-sharing program goes into effect.

Emirates serves about 45 destinations

His Majesty King Hussein

A statesman and a humanitarian



THIS SATURDAY, 14 November, the Kingdom celebrates His Majesty King Hussein's 63rd birthday. Mass celebrations are taking place. King Hussein bin Talal is the 42nd generation direct descendant of the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) through the male line of the Prophet's grandson Al Hassan.

King Hussein's branch of the Hashemite family ruled in Mecca from 1201 (C.E.) until 1925 (C.E.). King Hussein's great grandfather, Sharif Hussein bin Ali, Emir of Mecca and later King of the Hijaz, led the Great Arab Revolt of 1916 against the Turkish colonial occupation of

Arab lands, thereby freeing and creating the modern states of the Hijaz, Syria, Iraq and Transjordan. Sharif Hussein's second son, King Abdullah, founded the Emirate of Transjordan on 11 April 1921. The Emirate assumed the name of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan upon formal independence from Britain on 22 March 1946.

King Hussein bin Talal was born in Amman on 14 November 1935 to Prince Talal bin Abdullah and Princess Zein Al-Sharaf bint Jamil. The King has two brothers, Their Royal Highnesses Prince Muhammad and Crown Prince El Hassan, and one sister, Her Royal Highness Princess Basma.

King Hussein completed his elementary education in Amman, and received his secondary education at Victoria College in Alexandria, Egypt, and at Harrow in England.

On 21 July 1951, King Abdullah was assassinated at Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem, while attending Friday prayers there with his grandson, King Hussein. As King Abdullah's eldest son, King Talal, was only able to rule for a brief period due to health reasons, King Talal's eldest son Hussein was proclaimed King of the Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan on 11 August 1952. A Regency Council was appointed until King Hussein's formal accession to the throne on 2 May

1953, when he came of age.

During that interim period, King Hussein attended the Royal Military Academy in Sandhurst, England, where he received his military education.

Over his 45-year reign, King Hussein has guided Jordan through several regional crises. The June 1967 War left Israel in occupation of the West Bank of Jordan and East Jerusalem, including the Old City. The East and West Banks of Jordan had united together by mutual consent after the 1948-1949 Arab-Israeli war, pending the final resolution of the Palestinian problem. King Hussein was subsequently instrumental in drafting UN Security Council Resolution 242, which calls for an Israeli withdrawal from all lands captured in the June 1967 War in exchange for peace.

This resolution serves as the basis for the current peace negotiations. King Hussein continued to defend the integrity and sovereignty of Jordan when an Israeli attempt to invade the East Bank of the Jordan River was repulsed at the Battle of Karameh on 21 March 1968, and also two years later in September 1970 by ending the subversive and destabilizing activities of various guerrilla factions based in Jordan.

King Hussein has always been committed to peace through diplomatic resolution of conflicts rather than the use of armed force. During the Gulf crisis of 1990-1991, King Hussein repeatedly attempted to mediate a peaceful solution to the conflict.

King Hussein has presided over the transformation of his

country from a tribal and nomadic society still under British colonial influence, to a fully modern state with a complete internal infrastructure, and literacy and education levels that are among the highest in the developing world. King Hussein is committed to popular consultation and participation in government as well as respect for human rights throughout the Arab world. Jordan today is internationally recognized as having the most exemplary human rights conditions in the region.

In 1989, Jordan held its first full and free parliamentary elections since 1967. Soon thereafter, King Hussein appointed a royal

commission representing the entire spectrum of Jordanian political thought to draft a national charter that would establish the framework for democracy and political pluralism in the country. The National Charter was ratified by King Hussein in June 1991.

Since the 1967 War, King Hussein has worked incessantly to convene an international peace conference in order to implement a just, comprehensive and lasting peace in the region based on UN Security Resolutions 242 and 338. King Hussein played a pivotal role in the convening of the Madrid Peace Conference in October 1991, not only by committing Jordan to the peace

process, but also by providing an umbrella for the Palestinian people to negotiate their future as part of a joint Jordanian-Palestinian delegation.

King Hussein married Queen Noor Al-Hussein on 15 June 1978. They have four children: Prince Hamzah (b. 29 March 1980), Prince Hashim (b. 10 June 1981), Princess Iman (b.

24 April 1983), and Princess Raiyah (b. 9 February 1986). King Hussein also has seven children from three previous marriages: Princess Alia (b. 13 February 1956); Prince Abdullah (b. 30 January 1962); Prince Feisal (b. 11 October 1963); Princesses Zein and Aisha (b. 23 April 1968); Princess Haya (b. 3 May 1974); Prince Ali (b. 23 December 1975). In addition, King Hussein has an adopted daughter, Abeer Muhaisin (b. 7 August 1972), and several grandchildren.

King Hussein is an accomplished sportsman in the fields of water sports, karate, fencing, skiing and tennis. His other hobbies include flying, motorcycling, race-car driving, amateur ham radio, and surfing the Internet. He reads extensively on political affairs, history, international law, military science, and aviation.

King Hussein holds a large number of decorations from Arab and other countries. Many books have been written about King Hussein and his policies. He himself has written three books: *Uneasy Lies The Head* (1962) about his childhood and early years as King, *My War with Israel* (1969), and *Mon Metier de Roi* (1973).



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Conveys their congratulations and best wishes to
His Majesty King Hussein
on the occasion of his birthday. And praying to God that the King will return home soon in the best of health

Jordan Petroleum Refinery Co.

Conveys their congratulations to
His Majesty King Hussein
on the occasion of his birthday.
And praying to God that the King will return home soon in the best of health.



Jordan Electric Power Co.

Conveys their congratulations to
His Majesty King Hussein
on the occasion of his birthday.
And praying to God that the King will return home soon in the best of health.



Jordan Phosphate Mining Co.
Conveys their congratulations and best wishes to

His Majesty King Hussein
on the occasion of his birthday.

And praying to God that the King will return home soon in the best of health

The Star
Jordanian public and cultural weekly

Conveys their congratulations and best wishes to
His Majesty King Hussein
on the occasion of his birthday. And praying to God that the King will return home soon in the best of health.



By William Packer

Known only unto God

As Shakespeare's *Feeble* has it in *Henry IV Part II*: "No man's too good to serve a prince; and let it go which way it will, he that dies this year is quit for the next."

11 November 1998 marked the 80th anniversary of Armistice day—the ending of the first world war—and it was time to pay homage at the killing fields, where my grandfather died.

I have seen Sordet's cavalry march through Inchy on the eve of Le Cateau; I have seen the Iron Corps of France march through the square at Ypres; I have seen the 1st Canadian Division marching to St Julian before the gas attack; but I have no remembrance to equal in any way that of the old regiments of the BEF marching to the Battle of Mons.

This view of a Captain Brownlow has always stayed with me, for my mother's father had marched with that same British Expeditionary Force, sent to France in August 1914, to defend the integrity of Belgium and be home by Christmas—that "contemptible little army" of the Kaiser's dismissive phrase.

But I know little about him. My grandmother was always reluctant to speak and I hardly thought to ask until too late. But I do know he had taken the Queen's shilling as a young man, and had been in the Boer War.

By 1914, 5426 Private John Wornham, 1st battalion The Hampshire Regiment, had been out of the army for some years but, as a former regular, was still on the reserve. So, by the end of August, he was back with the colours in France, coming into the line at Le Cateau on the 26th, just as General Sir Horace Dorrien was turning to face overwhelming numbers of Germans in what proved to be a brilliant and crucial holding action, buying just enough time for the British to disengage and slip away.

The 1/Hampshire, and my grandfather with it, fought with the BEF through the long retreat to the Marne, the advance to the Aisne and the Race to the Sea. By late October, they were at Ypres, in the one corner of Belgium the Germans were never to take. And there they stayed, through the 1st Battle of Ypres that autumn, the 2nd Ypres and the first gas attacks in the spring of 1915.

In early July the battalion was back in the front line, across the Yser Canal in front of Boesinghe, north of Ypres itself, just where the Salient begins its eastward bulge and protective sweep around the city.

On July 6 the 1/Rifle Brigade had recaptured 300 yards of what was called the International Trench, which the 1/Hampshire took over from the 2/Lancashire Fusiliers on the night of July 8-9, coming out of the line on the night of July 10.

The regimental history laconically records that the forward companies were "heavily shelled and trench-mortared, while bombing duels went on all day. With the trenches much-damaged and the parapet not bullet-proof, casualties were heavy. Footnote: 18 killed and 55 wounded."

My grandfather was one of the 18. He was 35. His body was never recovered, or at least identified, for quite possibly it lies in one of the several British cemeteries nearby (there are more than 150 in the Salient as a whole). A soldier of the Great War: "Known unto God."

His name is on the war memorial in the marketplace at Faringdon once in Berkshire, now allotted to Oxfordshire, close to the tiny village of Shellingford where he and my grandmother had been living;



and it is inscribed too on the from Britain and the Empire, killed in the Salient alone, between 1914 and August 15 1917, "who have no known grave."

Tyne Cot, on the slopes of Passendale Ridge about five miles to the north-east, has another 35,000 names, and 14,000 graves besides, from 3rd Ypres (Passendale) through to the end of the war. The scale of such loss is beyond comment.

I had never visited Ypres, but with the 80th anniversary of the Armistice coming up—the Queen was in Ypres yesterday, Armistice Day itself—this seemed at last the time to go. I went first to the Menin Gate to see my grandfather's name, which I found with surprising ease. Blomfield's handsome but in no sense triumphal arch stands where the medieval gate had stood until the 18th century, to close again the gap in Vauban's historic ramparts. It sits close to the city's heart in every sense, and I never thought so looming a presence would seem so benign.

And every evening at 8 o'clock, as it has every day in peacetime since its com-

pletion in 1929, in rain and shine, in a spontaneous gesture that has become fixed tradition, the traffic stops for buglers of the local fire brigade to sound the last post beneath its arches. The ceremony is simplicity itself, dignified, sincere and infinitely touching.

A new museum, "In Flanders Fields," in the old Cloth Hall, rebuilt after the Great War, like the town itself, is unexpectedly compact, set upon a sequence of thematic displays and tableaux, some still provisional, that make as much use of archive film, inter-active screens and special effects as of actual objects.

The intention is to dwell, at the personal level of experience, on context and the general aspects of the life that had to be endured, on either side—the general enthusiasm at the outset; the "life of the trenches"; the Christmas truces; social and military prejudices and expectations; the artists and poets; discipline; the nurses and the wounded; the prisoners of war.

Any such enterprise inevitably runs the risk of tendentious revisionism, or mere

trivialisation, but here it is carried off, for the most part, with a sympathetic and imaginative objectivity. But Ypres itself and the Salient are still the real museum, though Hell-Fire Corner is now only the first roundabout on the Menin Road, and modern factories encroach upon the battlefields.

Bodies still turn up as foundations are dug—only last month more were properly buried in the cemetery kept open for the purpose. All of these were gifts in perpetuity from the Belgians, but since the second world war, the Germans and French have concentrated their graves into one or two.

The German cemetery at Langemark, along the ridge from Pilkem, alone commemorates, on the dark marble slabs laid beneath the trees, 44,000 "dead," with 24,000 laid in one vast mass grave. There too are the 2,000 untraced soldiers, let off in 1914 to enjoy the action while it lasted, and be back by Christmas and the new term.

The British, too, have their larger ceme-

teries, but even they are set around what were the immediate burials close to the fighting. The strong local feeling is that they should never be rationalized, for they are part of the historic fabric of the Salient, testimony on the spot to the reality, over three dreadful years and more, of the constant raids and assaults, the "bombing duels" and "heavy shelling" of the reports.

To walk along a little path through the fields, to the cross that marks a little plot with its dozen or two well-kept graves, to Caesar's Nose perhaps, or Dragon Camp, is even more sobering than seeing the regiments of headstones marching across the hillside.

The city archive could not have been more helpful, and armed with a photocopy of the old trench map, my guide and I set off next morning to find that International Trench—or rather where it was, for except in isolated preserves such as Sanctuary Wood and Essex Farm, no trenches remain, nor even traces.

But it was not difficult. Over the bridge at Boesinghe, right and right again down

the lane to the long left-hand bend given on the map, and there we were. And just in time, for the road is now blocked off, and the ground much tumbled and disturbed in evident preparation for more development, though for the moment the disturbance seemed not inappropriate.

The trench had run close to the road at a shallow tangent to its curve, with its back to the canal. I walked across to stand more or less upon its line, and looked out across the bleak autumn fields beyond the road. There, 300 yards away to the front, was the Farm 14, just as on the map. And as I stopped, a large hare started up and disappeared behind a spoil-heap. Birds apart, it was the only wild thing I saw all day.

Only on the ground does one even begin to understand. Looking out across this sudden, gently undulating landscape, you can just see the low rises in the distance that form the rim of the shallow half-bowl that was the Salient—Pilkem Ridge away to the left, and Langemark beyond, and so on round to Passendale, Sanctuary Wood and to the south.

This is a country where even an elevation of 50ft affords a commanding advantage: and there, with their backs to the canal, trying to move up, were the British; there, always trying to move down, were the Germans. The stalemate cost 500,000 lives.

According to the register at the Menin Gate, my grandfather was killed on July 9 1915. His commanding officer, Captain K.A. Johnston, thought it was the 10th. No matter. His letter to my grandmother, written in indelible pencil, is by me now.

It begins with sincere but formal sympathy—for how many such letters had he already sent. But then one senses something more personal. "I am particularly grieved about it, as it always seems my best men go; but I suppose we must all have our turn. There are very few of us left in this company who were here six months ago."

My grandmother once told me that Jack, her husband, home on leave that spring, had said he knew he would not come back. He went away nonetheless, to do, as Captain Johnston wrote, king and country.

As Shakespeare's *Feeble* has it in *Henry IV Part II*: "No man's too good to serve a prince; and let it go which way it will, he that dies this year is quit for the next."

I have my grandfather's regimental cap badge, and his medals too: the South Africa Medal, and "Pip, Squeak and Wilfred," the Victory Medal, the General Service Medal and the fine Mons Star of the Old Contemptibles.

As I child, I lived in a garrison town, and each Remembrance Sunday my grandmother would pin these medals to her coat, and walk proud and sad behind the band to the parish church. The numbers in the history shock us still, but it is the contained and private griefs that bring them home. The thought of their last parting haunts me still, the slow walk to the station, the waving hands and the long, lonely wait as the train passed out of view. Some lines of Wilfred Owen come to mind.

And I think of the "beasties of great bolts in the wall" that were

A few, a few, too few for drums and yells, may creep back, silent, to still village wells, up half-known roads.

Financial Times Syndication

In the spirit of immortalisation

By Kieran Cooke

EVERY 18 months, Lenin has a bath. He is lowered into a mixture of alcohol, water, glycerine and potassium acetate for two weeks. When he emerges, his skin is as supple as the day he died three quarters of a century ago.

Amid the turmoil of present day Russia, some of the rituals of the old Soviet empire survive. When Lenin died in 1924, his body was embalmed. It is still in its mausoleum in Moscow's Red Square, once visited by millions of Soviet citizens, now more of a tourist curiosity.

Professor Ilya Zbarsky worked in the special embalming laboratory at the Lenin mausoleum for 18 years. His tale is a fascinating one, full of macabre detail, set against the terrifying backdrop of the Stalin years. Included in the book are several previously unseen photos—one of a wild-eyed Lenin shortly before his death.

Lenin himself did not express any wish to be glorified in death. His widow spoke strongly against monuments in his name. Trotsky and other political members were opposed, but Stalin, taking on the mantle of Lenin, decided to initiate a personality cult: "The committee for the immortalisation of Lenin's memory" was formed.

At first Stalin's henchmen wanted to refrigerate the body. The cream of the USSR's bio-chemists, including Zbarsky's father, nervously disagreed. There were lengthy discussions about double glazing, condensation and the lighting to be installed in the sarcophagus. Stalin ordered that Lenin's brain be extracted; researchers were charged with demonstrating that the father of the revolution had been a



Lenin, the leader of the Russian revolution

genius.

Lenin's body was immersed in more or less the same cocktail of chemicals it is bathed in today. Decaying skin tissue was restored. "Stitches were inserted under the dead man's moustache to close the lips. False eyes replaced the real ones to prevent the sockets from becoming too sunken; then the eyelids were closed again and sewn in place."

It was a tense business. One slip up and the embalmers would be given, at the very least, one way tickets to Siberia. To relax, the scientists indulged in a drinking session with the help of 96 degree proof alcohol: the spirit was part of a consignment used for embalming Lenin's corpse.

Zbarsky, now 85, first

entered the mausoleum in 1934. "The preservation process involved, first of all, removing Lenin's jacket and trousers, which were kept in place with laces tied behind the back. As I moved the arms I could tell from the touch of the skin, which was yellowish-white in colour, that it had retained its natural elasticity. I found the sensation disagreeable."

During the second world war, Lenin's by now well-pickled body was removed for safekeeping to western Siberia. Zbarsky and his father were in attendance. "We had no fixed hours, and spent most of our time making minor repairs to the corpse."

Later, Soviet expertise in embalming was exported round

the world: Soviet scientists flew to the jungles of North Vietnam to embalm the body of Ho Chi Minh. Bulgarian and Mongolian dictators were given the same treatment. Problems arose when rebels cut the power supplying the air conditioning round the body of former president Neto of Angola. The body was saved by requisitioning a consignment of ice from a nearby ice cream shop. Like hundreds of thousands of others, Zbarsky and his father eventually fell foul of Stalin and were removed from their work at the mausoleum. When the Soviet Union collapsed, staff and funding at Lenin's tomb were severely cut back.

Lenin's remains have become a political football. President Yeltsin says Lenin should be taken out of his sarcophagus and buried. Old communists are strongly opposed. One has threatened to shoot anyone who dares take Vladimir Illich away.

To augment its income, the mausoleum now specialises in providing embalming services for Russia's nouveaux riches, many of them gangsters. Mafiosi are laid out on the same grey marble slab which, in the early 1950s, was used for embalming Stalin. "Charges range from \$1,500 for a single day's work (for example when the head has not been smashed to a pulp by bullets) to \$10,000 for a whole week (if the whole body was blown to pieces by a bomb and has to be put together again)."

Professor Zbarsky shakes his head at the horror of it all. "The recent extension of the mausoleum laboratory's activities to cover the embalming of mafiosi strikes me as typical of the depth to which the authority of the government of Russia has sunk in the last few years."

Financial Times Syndication

The problems of building an embassy in Berlin

By Clive Freeman

Berlin—For the United States, the idea of building an embassy alongside the Brandenburg Gate—this city's most famous symbol—seemed an inspired

idea after Berlin was reunited eight years ago and regained its status as Germany's capital. After all, it was a touch romantic planning to erect a new American diplomatic representation on the very site where its old pre-World War II embassy had been until the Nazis declared war against the US in 1941.

But then problems arose to delay a start on the project. For years, the United States Congress failed to approve funds needed to finance the 140 million dollar building. In Washington, there was blunt talk of "no cash being available for the project."

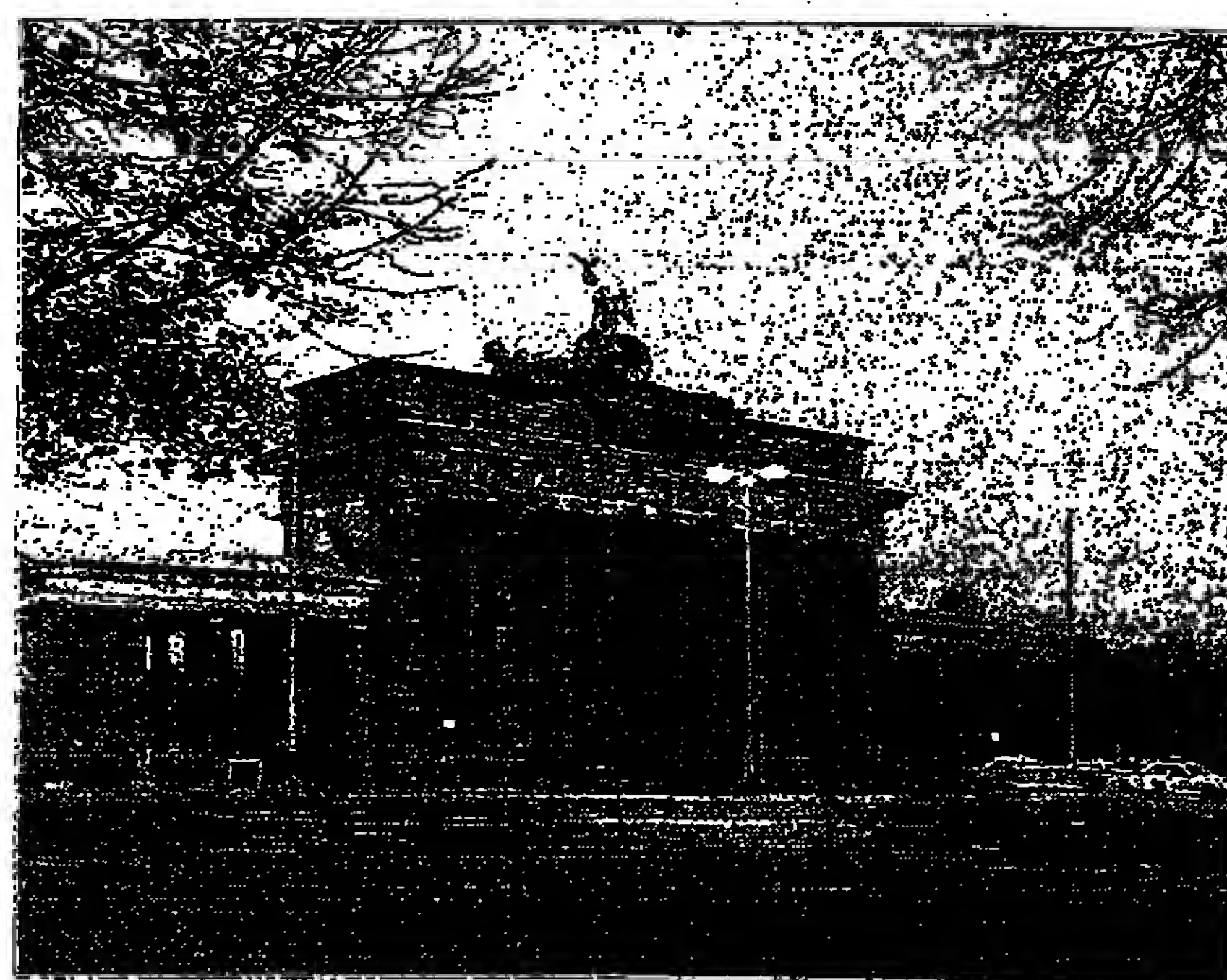
The spectacle of the world's number one superpower having difficulty raising money to pay for a new embassy in Berlin, caused widespread consternation among Germans, many of whom feel hugely grateful to the United States for standing firm in Berlin during the Cold War years.

One prominent Berlin investor urged that an appeal fund be set up in Germany aimed at raising money for the project if the Americans couldn't find the cash. That problem, at least, has now been resolved. John Kornblum, the United States ambassador to Germany, says a first instalment of 50 million dollars towards the cost of the embassy has now been approved by the US Congress.

But now, another difficulty has arisen to jeopardise the project. Following the horrific terrorist bombing at the US Embassy in Nairobi in the summer, security arrangements at American diplomatic representations around the world have been sharpened in recent months.

The CIA, which has responsibility for

embassy security operations, argues that the new embassy must be located at least 30 metres distant from the nearest road. Berlin officials have countered, saying that is impossible at the Brandenburg Gate, and in the Pariser Platz vicinity.



The Brandenburg Gate in Berlin

After a meeting between Berlin Mayor Eberhard Diepgen and Kornblum last week, local government spokesman Michael Andreas Butz, said the city authorities could not consider re-routing the Ebert and Behren streets which run close to the embassy site near the Brandenburg Gate. Kornblum spoke of being "unpleasantly surprised" by Butz's comments, saying they stood in contradiction to what was expressed during his meeting earlier with mayor Diepgen.

It was beginning to appear as if a preliminary decision had already been taken, ahead of talks scheduled between US and German security officials later this month, he said wistfully. Butz has since denied that a row has blown up over the issue, claiming he is sure a "pragmatic solution" will be found at the upcoming meeting of US and German security officials in Berlin. The compact, new embassy site stands on the right hand side of the Brandenburg Gate when viewed at

from the west. It was back in 1931 that the United States bought the former "Blucher-Palais" on the Pariser Platz. But before the embassy was fully functional a fire damaged the building. After the building's restoration, embassy diplomats were again active there by 1939.

Two years later, the American chargé d'affaires and the rest of the diplomatic staff were moved to Bad Nauheim after the United States' entry into World War II led to the shut-down of its embassy, which for a spell, stood under Swiss government protection.

During the war, the building was badly damaged during allied bombing raids. Finally, in 1957, the post-war East German authorities ordered that the ramshackle building be demolished because it stood in the way of the communist border area with west Berlin.

The new US Embassy at the Brandenburg Gate, if realised, will eventually serve as a Chancellery for American diplomats transferring from Bonn to Berlin. But not all embassy staff will work there. American diplomats are already making use of a nearby building in the Neustadtische Kirch Street, which formerly served as the US Embassy to communist East Germany in the 1970s and 80s.

In more recent years, the building has been functioning as the United States' "Berlin Embassy branch office," while senior staff remained in Bonn. But recently it got upgraded. Ambassador Kornblum arrived to place a brass plaque on its facade, denoting that it was once again an "Embassy of the United States of America."

It will retain this role, even if the new building is realised at the Brandenburg Gate in 2000, when staff will be divided between the two buildings.

LA Times/Washington Post News Service

Rolls and Bentley's new machines are instant collectors' items

By Paul Dean

FOR EVERY dream there is a machine, and every machine has its maker. Rolls-Royce & Bentley Motor Cars Ltd. of Crewe, England, has been one such noble creator for three years short of a century. The company is also the single, signal source of twin automotive pedigrees that reach beyond obtainable dreams to barely attainable fantasies.

These great cars are the stuff of British queens and Saudi princes, old sultans and new dictators, lords of manors and bosses of drug cartels. Not exactly the folks who live next door.

Rollers and Bentleys are so expensive, so impractical, so much the global symbol of ultimate wealth and power, that even billionaires have been unable to step from one without looking back at their dignified wheels. Which makes it appear they're out of the budget.

Meanwhile, back in the 'burbs, we mortals must be satisfied with crumbs of cradle-to-grave coddling: arriving in a Rolls-Royce for a high school prom, leaving the church after your wedding, being on time for your own funeral.

Now all this fun and decadence seems threatened. During the summer, German upstarts Volkswagen and BMW came bopping along and snaggled Bentley and Rolls-Royce from beneath the elevated noses of romantics and loyalists whose opposition was less about money, more about foreigners mucking about with a British dowager older than the Queen Mum. Despite the upheaval, with horsepower and price and smarter sales techniques, the German

litz German—Rolls and Bentley managed to make three new dream machines in the first seven months of this year.

And the \$230,000 Rolls-Royce Silver Seraph, the \$215,000 Bentley Arnage and, most recently, the \$330,000 Bentley Continental SC actually transcend mere dream machines. These are the first and the last of the few.

Silver Seraph is the first Rolls-Royce to be fitted with a BMW engine. It's also the last of the Croesus moves production someplace else. Arnage is the first Bentley to be baptized with an engine from BMW. All three are the last sedans and coupes designed with Rolls and Bentley still beneath British ownership.

Add tiny production numbers to the mix, and you have a trio of collectible cars worthy of a place in your investment portfolio.

We—to apply the royal prerogative—have driven these ermine triplets. We—as Queen Victoria once snuffed—were not totally amused. And it has nothing to do with the GG factor, or the number of times you mumble "golly-gee" when reminded of the price. Because when deep pockets go in search of the finest that money can buy, obviously money isn't the issue.

Nor were we intimidated by all that luxury, only deeply appreciative of the painstaking care that speaks to hand-craftsmen still polishing woods and stitching rich leathers with the reverence of their fathers.

Truth is, you feel uncomfortable at the helm of anything weighing just



The Silver Seraph (left) is one Holy Roller. Not to be outdone are its cousins, Bentley's Arnage (right) and Continental SC (foreground). All three can be yours for a tad under \$300,000.

under 3 tons and moving at 142 mph. Or, when surrounded by nervous traffic, wondering if your width will fit that space ahead. And, frankly, we've always been sensitive to sneers from folk in Saturns and Mazdas who view such chariots and presume your vulgarity.

The true wonder of a Rolls or a Bentley, however, is high-tolerance engineering producing mighty power that barely whispers. Despite their weight, a perfectly tuned chassis and precise suspension geometry keep these huge cars on even wheels, no matter the maneuvering.

Sure, they represent decadence within extravagance. But they also carry the legacies of Charles and Louis Tiffany, Thomas Chippendale, Abraham-Louis Breguet and three other blokes: Charles Rolls, Henry Royce and W.O. Bentley. The Silver Seraph—a somewhat pretentious reference to a celestial being said to hover above God's throne—is powered by a 5.4-liter V-12 developing 322 horsepower. That muscle shoves this incredible bulk from zero to 60 mph in 6.8 seconds. Or as quick as a Jaguar XJS that weighs many hundredweights less.

The Seraph has been lightened by

several hundred pounds and shortened by an inch. The traditional squared radiator has been softened and the famed Flying Lady shrunk. Styling is a design-in-the-round, which means eyes don't stumble over angles and edges but are coaxed around the corners by rounder ends, a rounder roof line and rounder headlights and taillights.

Add liberal use of chrome—even side mirrors have silvered backs—and the Seraph, certainly going away, looks very much like a Lincoln Town Car. Still, this remains a majestic and very exclusive environment that all should taste once before we shuffle off. So, dream on.

Bentley's Arnage is a luscious overlay of the Seraph, especially the sheet metal, its dimensions, door count and interior appointments. However, in a massive effort to clearly separate the brands, seers at Crewe have exhumed Bentley's racing glories, a performance heritage of the '20s and '30s that stretched from Indianapolis to Brooklands.

Hence a former model called Brooklands, plus a front air dam, serious wheels and a steel mesh grille for the Arnage—named after a brake-burning right-hand turn at Le Mans, the circuit

Bentley cars owned from 1927 to '30. Such mining of the past certainly extends to the engine room, where a new V-8 by Bentley-BMW-Cosworth has twin turbochargers puffing out 350 horsepower.

The steering wheel is smaller and fatter, in keeping with endurance race cars. The shifter is short, molded to the fist, and mounted on the center console. Instruments are analog with black numerals on beige backgrounds, just the way they were in classic times. The Arnage is quicker to 60 mph than the Silver Seraph and by almost a full second; runs out at 150 mph compared with a piddling 140 mph for its cousin; and this sporting Bentley rides and handles rather like an up-market Corvette.

We simply don't know who was thinking what when Bentley conceived the Continental SC, which stands for Sedan Coupé. A spokesman said that a car with removable glass panels over the front seats offers "a combination of open-air motoring and the comfort of a closed cabin." Or this could be Volkswagen's way of saying its knowledge of classic cars isn't confined to old Beetles.

Whatever. We are left with a perfectly wonderful Bentley Continental

with a big hole in its roof. Everything else about the SC—its 6.7-liter, turbocharged V-8 producing 400 horsepower, shortened wheelbase and suspension tuned for fast touring—is yesterday's equipment. Only a fixed moon roof over the rear seats, and removable smoked-glass panels reminiscent of the Porsche Targa and the Pontiac Firebird T-Top, signify anything new.

Bentley has done a smooth job with the concept, although fresh-air fiends will quickly learn that driving with panels off and windows down is a configuration best suited to low speeds and perfect days. Then there's barely a quiver of air reaching the rear seats. At speed, with October in the air, you'll be deaf in one ear about three minutes before your forehead freezes.

Removed panels are stored in the trunk. Remounting is also a manual operation, although a power toggle on the center console will latch and lock the glassware. It is all a bit of a wrestle, and maybe too much heavy lifting for wealthy seniors within the car's buyer profile.

LA Times-Washington Post News Service

Long-awaited BMW motorcycle is a dream ride come true

By David Colker

DEATH VALLEY, California—If motorcycles had feelings, my faithful but slightly ragtag 1982 Yamaha 550 was about to need a support group.

I was about to have a four-day fling with one of the hottest bikes of 1999, the BMW R1100S, a high-tech, high-powered bike that was unveiled this summer with much fanfare.

This long-awaited model, which had generated rumors in the motorcycle world for years, is BMW's latest entry into one of the fastest-growing segments of the motorcycle types—the sport-tourer. As the name implies, these machines are meant to be a hybrid of nimble sportsbikes and luxury tourers, which is somewhat like trying to combine the best features of ballet dancers and sumo wrestlers.

But a motorcycle comfortable and stable enough for long-distance riding, and yet sufficiently agile to dance through twisting turns, would be many riders' dream bike.

At first glance, the R1100S is fittingly and pleasingly schizophrenic. The lower half of the bike features a 98-horsepower, twin-cylinder engine that enables the bike to go from zero to 60 in 4.4 seconds. That kind of power cannot be achieved with an engine that looks subtle, but BMW did not take the opportunity to pile on the flash. There's no overabundance of chrome on this mostly exposed engine. The tailpipes, which bend up under the seat (a design feature pioneered by, and perhaps borrowed from, Ducati), are barely visible.

Not surprisingly, given that this is a BMW, the motor when started is more purr than roar. If the bottom half of the bike is all business, the upper section looks as if it belongs on the Jetsons' landing pad. Above all that machinery floats the slender body of the motorcycle, all curves and flowing lines. You don't so much sit on this bike as mold your body to its ergonomically friendly shape.

Raves from both sides of the Atlantic have greeted the look of the R1100S—credited to a six-person

BMW team headed by an American. But with a base price of about \$15,000 (the deluxe model, with anti-lock braking system, a center stand and heated handlebar grips goes for about \$18,000), few motorcyclists are going to acquire this bike on looks alone.

I parked my Yamaha at BMW's local headquarters in Los Angeles and took the R1100S out on a 1,500-mile test ride. My first day was meant to bring out the bike's attributes, good and bad, as a long-range tourer. I was taking a 500-mile-plus route from L.A. to Davis, just west

As with most sophisticated twins, the bike delivered tons of torque—the raw power that allows it to gain speed quickly. It also has a good bit of the vibration, felt chiefly in the hands, that is also part of a twin's nature.

One of the most amazing features of the ride is how little wind directly hits you, especially considering that the front fairing is not very tall. With clever use of the bodywork and even, reportedly, the shape of the mirrors, the designers channeled the wind around instead of onto the rider.

Early the next morning I

To be fair, most touring riders do not attempt as many miles in a day, and as I got used to the characteristics of this bike, I found some ways to relieve stiffness. But the seating position on the R1100S is probably the main compromise that would make this bike less than ideal for ardent tourers.

Luckily, the next day was one on which I could rest. I took my friend, Amy, for a ride past cornfields in the flat countryside around Davis. Unlike my mid-sized Yamaha, which handles quite differently when riding "two up," the R1100S was so powerful I hardly knew Amy was there.

Hence the next morning I rode into San Francisco, where I was to join a loosely organized motorcycle group that makes an annual fall trip through Yosemite National Park and Death Valley. I rounded the corner to the starting point, where more than 30 bikes were parked. Almost everyone came over to take a look at the bike, which most of the riders had seen only in motorcycle magazines. Some even took pictures of it.

As we made our way into the countryside, I finally got the chance to see how the machine takes the winding roads sportsbike lovers seek out. Here is where the R1100S really shines.

Although about 100 pounds heavier than most sportsbikes, it handles curves with grace and ease, limited only by the abilities of its operator. Maybe it can't readily lean quite as far over as a dedicated sportsbike or take the "twisties" at as high a speed, but its trademark smoothness goes a long way toward making up for any compromises. I came to appreciate the forward sitting position as I navigated the curves.

The R1100S is not going to be everyone's idea of a dream bike. A confirmed performance rider would still likely want a sportsbike, which can be bought at about half the price. And a dedicated touring rider would probably not want to give up the creature comforts of a bike built for that sole purpose. But as a hybrid, the R1100S earns exceedingly high marks.

Audi's smooth, solid wagon

By Tom Incantalupo

WANNA BUCK a trend and do it in style? Buy a station wagon instead of a sport utility vehicle and equip it with all-wheel drive. On a budget? Consider a Subaru. Got more bucks to spend? Try the Audi A-6 Avant.

Except for some ground clearance, you'll give up nothing in bad weather go-power to an SUV, and you'll gain the kind of handling and ride comfort no SUV can provide. Despite all those claims of "car-like" behavior, reported the LA Times-Washington Post News Service.

On sale since summer, Audi's '99 A-6 Avant joins the A-6 sedan and, for its base price of \$36,600, has styling that, for my money, is breathtaking, along with standard equipment that begins with the Quattro full-time all-wheel drive system. (A-6 sedans can be ordered in front-wheel drive instead of all-wheel.)

Cargo room with the rear seatback folded is more than 73 cubic feet. Just as a point of reference, that's about 7 cubic feet less than a Ford Taurus wagon, but still ample.

Hauling this 3,800-pound, mid-sized car is a 200-hp V-6 engine that provides sufficiently quick launches from a stoplight. But it is less impressive in maintaining speed uphill or in highway passing, when it often has to be rescued by a downshift of the five-speed automatic transmission. At just 2.8 liters in displacement, it is small as six-cylinder engines go, and even five valves per cylinder and variable valve timing can't quite overcome that.

Premium gasoline is its beverage of choice. The test vehicle's transmission almost always shifted smoothly. It can be shifted manually, if you prefer, by sliding the shift lever into a separate gate to the right of "Drive" and then nudging the stick forward or back.

The A-6 feels solid, is very quiet inside and it handles well, though it never lets the driver forget its weight. It has variable-effort power steering and,

as you'd expect, provides the firm ride we associate with European cars.

Standard items to make your life with A-6 easier include 12-way power seats, a steering wheel that telescopes as well as tilts, front- and side-impact air bags, dual-zone climate control, cruise control, a trip computer, front and rear fog lamps, headlamp washers, rear window wiper/washer and a stereo with cassette player. There also is wiring in place for a cell phone and a dealer-installed CD player.

A \$1,500 convenience package, which the test car had, adds a memory system for multiple drivers' preferred seat and mirror settings, a glass sunroof, a Home-link garage-door opener and auto-dimming inside and outside mirrors.

A \$650 cold-weather package, also in the tester, adds heated seats and steering wheel. Alloy wheels for \$225 brought the tester's price to \$39,475, with freight. That includes three years or 50,000 miles of free scheduled maintenance.

Upholstery is perforated "leatherette." (Leather is available as an option, for \$1,550), and the entire interior looks rich, tastefully seasoned with wood trim. The fuel gauge is a bit on the small side, and most

of the stereo's controls are too alike to locate easily by touch, but, overall, the interior functioned well.

Nets in the cargo area can be fastened to keep stuff from sliding around and to protect rear seaters from items sliding forward, as might occur in a short stop. The cargo area also has tie-downs, a tool kit and a first-aid kit.

An option families might consider is a rear-facing third seat, intended for children; it costs \$700. When not in use, the seat can be swiveled to the side or removed entirely. It comes with its own head restraint and seat belts.

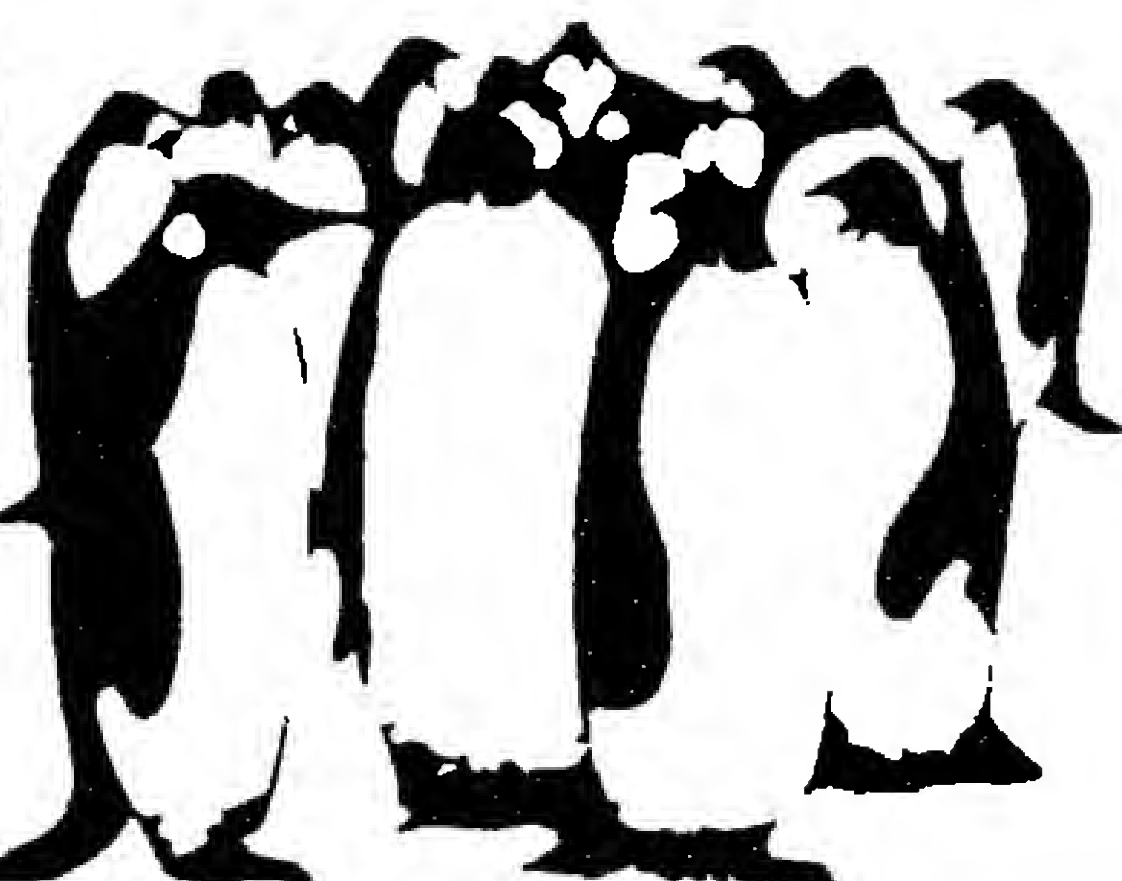
The test model didn't have it. But it did have something very peculiar in the cargo area: a hinged cover over the well containing the spare tire that, when removed, revealed another cover. Audi says it's needed to fill what would otherwise be the footwell for the third seat.

In all, Audi has given us another all-wheel drive alternative for people who just can't see themselves in a truck, for whatever reason.

It might not be as easy to find in the parking lot as your neighbor's Suburban, but it'll be well worth the search when you do.

Data on the 1999 Audi A-6 Avant

- Engine: 2.8-liter V-6, 200 horsepower
- Transmission: Five-speed automatic, all-wheel drive
- Safety: Dual front and side-impact air bags, anti-lock brakes, front and rear fog lamps
- Place of assembly: Neckarsulm, Germany
- Weight: 3,858 pounds Cargo room, rear seatback up/folded: 36.4 cubic feet/73.2 cubic feet
- Price as driven: \$39,475, including destination charge
- EPA mileage: 17 mpg city, 26 mpg hwy

AROUND
TOWNPetra Tours
reception

Petra Travel & Tourism Co., General Sales Agents for Austrian Airlines, held a reception for Jordanian Travel Agents to meet with Mr Heimo Gradischig, New Sales Manager-Jordan. In a welcome speech, Mr Gradischig thanked all present for their support to Austrian Airlines, and offered his personal support and assistance for the Travel agents and their passengers.

OFF THE
WALLBeing
there...

By Rana Haddad
Special to The Star

I NEVER would have thought I would visit one of these places, as I was always against the idea, but visit it I did. For those who are asking where this place is, all I can say is that most of us—once, or another—have been there. The funny thing is that we enjoyed being there, but we would never dream of admitting to our friends that we actually went there.

I am talking about second-hand clothes stores. The bad smell that I expected to encounter was not there. Instead, I was welcomed by lights and music.

It wasn't my idea to go there, but I told one of my friends that I needed to buy a pair of comfortable shoes. She told me to go there, as I was guaranteed to find what I was looking for, and more importantly, it would be cheap.

On arriving at the store, I was immediately taken back by the wide range of items, and by the types of customers doing their shopping there. I found people from all social classes. At one point, a brand new Mercedes car pulled up outside the shop, and a very wealthy looking couple entered, intent on finding something special. There is something here for everyone, from Nina Ricci and Versace to second-hand shoes.

My curiosity was aroused by now, so I decided to have a little conversation with the owner of the shop. He told me that people from all walks of life shop in his store, and that once they see what is on offer, they always return again for another look. The funny thing though, is that they will never admit to going shopping at a second-hand shop.

He said people are forced to shop in his store, because of the high prices for new clothes, which many cannot afford. Even so, he said that many items in his store are of the same quality as the new products on the high street, just cheaper that's all. He even said that he has actors and actresses visiting his store, looking for certain items to match their latest roles.

I asked him what was the strangest thing he ever saw in his shop. He told me about an old man who used to come to his shop every day, without fail, and rummage around the clothes. Curiosity got the better of the shop owner one day, so he followed him around the store. He saw that the old man was checking all the pockets of the jackets and trousers. It transpired that the old man had found an old coin in one jacket, and so he always returned to see if he could find another. He dreamed that one day he would find another coin, similar to the one in his possession.

Anyhow, my dream certainly came true, as I found a nice pair of comfortable shoes at a very reasonable price. However, I still won't admit to where I bought them from!

Mohammed Abu Aziz
Past revived in vivid colors

By Kofi Attah
Special to The Star

HATRED, HOPE and desire are just some of the themes that the new exhibition at the French Cultural Center seeks to depict. The paintings by Mohammed Abu Aziz artist are complex but if the visitor uses his imagination, the meanings will be revealed.

There is a lot of sentimentality and nostalgia in his work. The 38 paintings displayed rebound off the canvas with their bright colors. He gives new meaning to illusion and reality, and his works create a state of naturalness and completeness.

'Al Atashaza' (Particles), the title of his exhibition, evokes the past. Exhibit No. 15 features broken lines of blue, brown and gray which depict debris, broken particles and disintegration. "I am trying to bring back to life the holocaust of Hiroshima, and to give the viewer some sense of the destruction," Abu Aziz says.

The artist clearly relives the destruction of Hiroshima, such as the numerous scars on the walls of the city. Here the disconcerting abstract motifs depict the destructive nature of warfare, and despite the passage of over two decades, the memory of the victims are still on his mind. The holes and debris became motifs, abstracted from the place that gave them birth.

In painting No.5, the holes show the devastation, stagnation and impediments of war, continuing his message of war's destructiveness. "Mind you, I know something about this subject, because I am a Jordanian with Palestinian roots," Abu Aziz hints. The artist links the past with the present. His Palestinian roots come through in his paintings. He creates a world where people are resurrected and deprived of everything, even the most basic requirements.

Born in Amman in 1971, Mohammed Abu Aziz went on to graduate from the Fine Arts Institute at the Ministry of Culture. His education did not stop there, as he had private tuition from well-known artists, such as the American artist Larry Thomas and the British artist Ashley



Through the reflection of his images, Abu Aziz helps us find the

Manning

Abu Aziz is only a young Jordanian artist, but he is able to master his chosen art form. His art gives us the impression that man is destructive and selfish and can easily destroy himself. "The waves of the sea may be useful, but they are also very destructive too. Man can be useful and destructive at the same time as well," he says.

Over all, the exhibition is well balanced and inventive. Although some of his frames are too modest, he should be proud of the invigorating colors with which he reminds us of the forces of destruction, calamity, catastrophe and oppression that man has to contend with.

Through the reflection of his images, Abu Aziz helps us find the

truth about life, about our spiritual being, about our inner minds, and about our fears and hopes. He proves beyond any reasonable doubt that art can arouse interest and curiosity, sentiments and feelings.

Viewing the pieces that hang brilliantly on the four walls of the exhibition hall, one may wonder if his philosophical concept of destruction is not too indoctrinating. His exhibition captures the soul and the mind of the visitor. The silent sounds they make are endemic to the age and appropriate to the young.

The exhibition held under the patronage Mr Bernard Emie, the French Ambassador to Jordan, will continue until 28 November.

An imaginative female trio

By Kofi Attah
Special to The Star

TO BE a female artist is one thing, but to have your work displayed with the great women artists of today is an achievement. This is indeed what happened at the Jordan Arts and Crafts Center during the exhibition titled 'Artisana', held under the patronage of HRH Princess Alia Al Hussein, from the 20 October to 10 November. The exhibition featured Batik, jewelry and sculptures, from three female artists from very different cultural backgrounds. They were American sculptor Susanna Caldwell, the American painter Darleen Karpowicz and the Jordanian artist Rawabi Abu Gazaleh Silawi.

Caldwell, a painter/sculptor displayed her skills in prints. Her 11 pieces were all philosophical, and paid tribute to

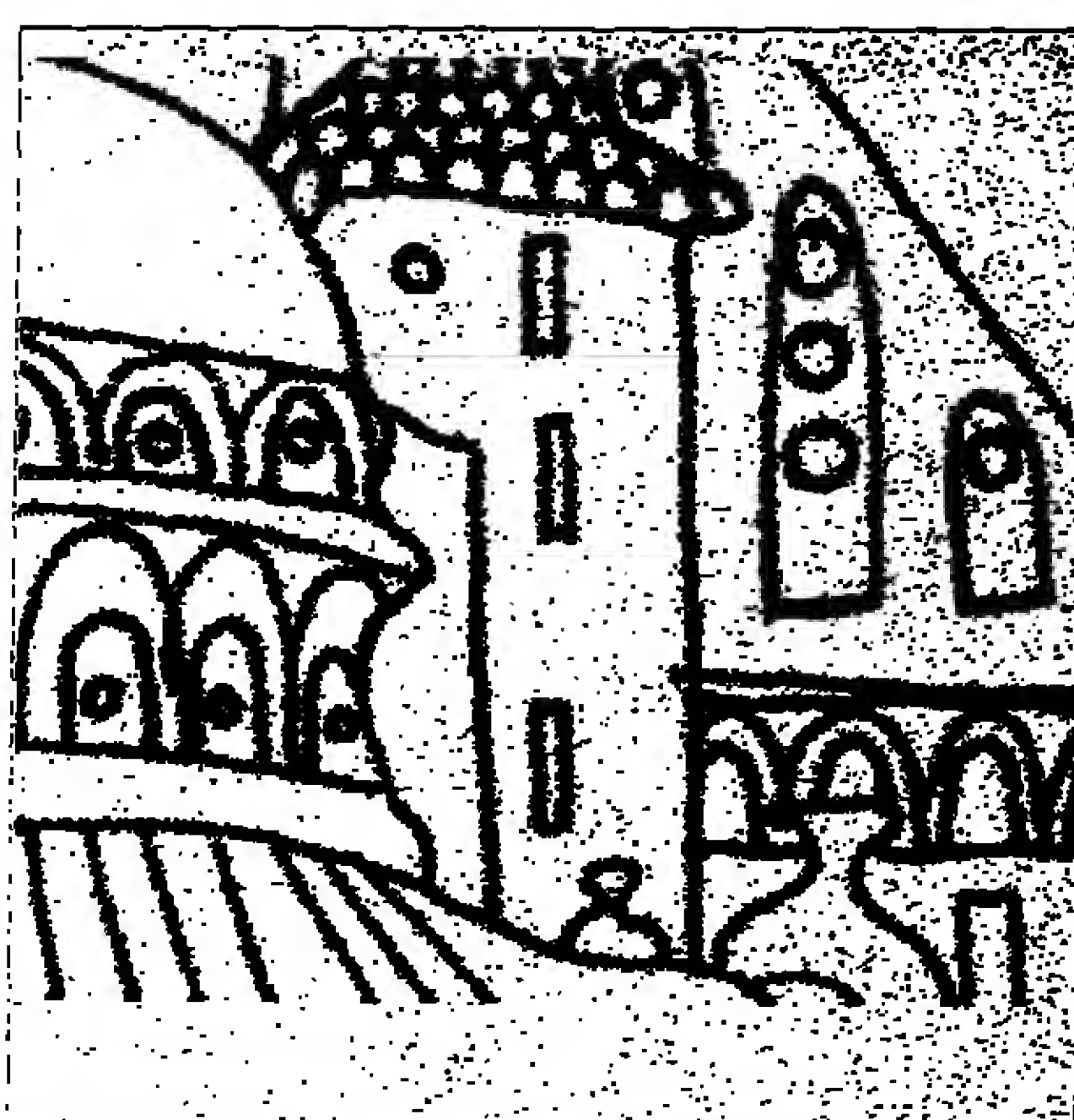
Jordan. The piece entitled 'Amphora' (1996) paid homage to the Jordanian potters, who still carry on this wonderful tradition today. It celebrates the classical lines and deeply satisfying grace of this art form.

Karpowicz's Batik pictures depict scenes that reflect the feel of Jordan. The 30 batik paintings exhibited featured mostly old villages and mosques. Batik designs are produced by painting wax onto cotton cloth where one does not want the dye to go. Darleen uses four or five wax applications, and four or five dye processes in one of her works. One of her pictures—the biggest of all in the inner room of the exhibition hall—showed a mosque that symbolizes the spiritual inclination of the people of Jordan.

Rawabi Abu Gazaleh Silawi, a designer, was the only Jordanian artist among the three, and she presented contemporary pieces of jewelry such as window earrings, door necklaces, and rings. She specializes in diamond setting, mending jewelry, gold plating and silverware.

The exhibition succeeded because of the diverse nature of all the three artists on display, and any visitor was sure to have their cultural appetite satisfied.

The Jordan Arts and Crafts Center also hosts a permanent exhibition of traditional Bedouin jackets, large bags made from cashmere Indian fabric, as well as many leather items. Models of the Ein Ghazal statues (the most oldest statues ever to be found in the world) are also available. The gallery is situated in Jabal Amman, 2nd circle, and is open daily (except Friday) from 9.30 am to 6.30 pm.

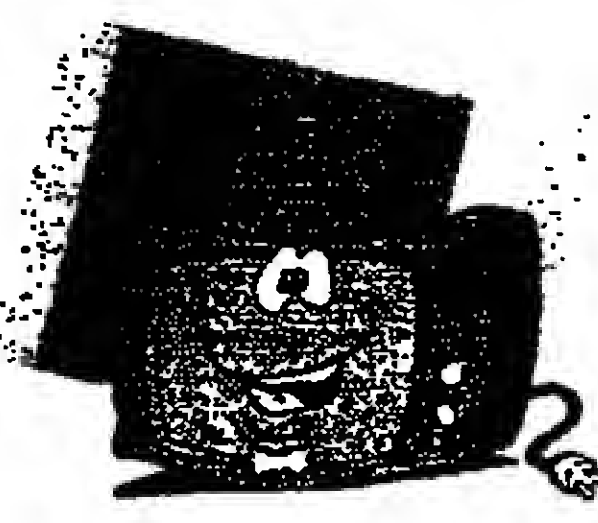
Charity party by
Christian Dior

CHRISTIAN DIOR, represented by Brigitte Lefebvre, delegate of Christian Dior for the Middle East, has organized a charity event in Amman, for the benefit of the association "Promise Welfare Society" headed by H.R.H. Princess Alia Al Faisal, on 7 November, at "Dunes Club."

All the proceeds have been dedicated to help "Promise Welfare Society" fulfill its promise to help those in the need in Jordan.

During a tea party, recreating the Dior atmosphere around the Lily of the Valley Theme so dear to Mr Christian Dior, they were able to see the film of the 1998-1999 Winter Haute Culture collection, "Voyage aboard the Dior-ient Express," discover 4 outfits of that collection, specially flown in from Paris, as well as attend the first launching of the new Dior "Hypnotic" Perfume.

Princess Alia Al Faisal, Princess Mouna, Mrs Fayed Tarawneh, wife of the prime minister Mrs Bernard Emie, wife of the French Ambassador in Jordan, Mrs Gianfederico Pedotti, wife of the Swiss Ambassador in Jordan, along with 300 hundred ladies attended the party.

ON
THE
BOX

Mirrors!

By Ibtihal Ahmad
Special to The Star

Maraya—mirrors in English—is one of the most enjoyable programs shown on ITV's Arabic Channel. No matter how many times a week the program is aired, viewers will always watch it with renewed enthusiasm and interest. Yassir Al Athama, the star actor, writer and producer of the program is a versatile and creative writer.

One always feels he has something new to offer his audience. He is also quite bold, for at times, he has no hesitations in criticizing the government. But he does it in a subtle and humorous manner to get his message across to the audience, leaving no hard feelings for those under the hammer.

The whole program could be taken as a social and political critique of the Arab world in the 20th century. Nowadays, Arabs tend to be interested in trivial and superficial matters, forgetting some of the important issues at hand.

The series does not only concentrate on the present, it also portrays and discusses the past. One of the script writer's favorite eras is the Ottoman one. His choice for this is based on the fact that a lot of injustice and hardship were imposed on the Arabs during that time.

Maraya has been running for over 10 years now and many of its episodes are reruns, but this does not make it any less interesting. On the contrary, by watching some of the earliest episodes, we realize the extent of the changes in the program and the acting and writing abilities of Al Athama. The earlier episodes, for instance, were confined to the geographical space of Syria, now they concentrate on broader issues that concern the whole of the Arab nation.

Al Athama has come a long way since his days as a supporting actor with Duraid Laham in a number of his famous plays. He has also acquired great experience in script writing since Maraya started in the mid-eighties. Indeed his success is due to the author's ingenuity in choosing his topics and to his wit.

The program is presented in a way that makes it easy for viewers to relate to the characters in the series. For instance, in some episodes we see Al Athama as a high and mighty government official who thinks he can change policies quite easily. While in others, we see him as the great Ottoman sultan who can rule the country in the manner he sees fit, and as the bored and unfaithful husband who is prepared to cheat and lie just to get his way.

We have no shortage of these characters in the Arab world. But his best personality is when he appears as the barber of ministers and party leaders, where he wrote agendas for political parties and he formed entire governments.

Sometimes Maraya uses simple, down to earth language while at others, the writer uses complex and rhythmic dialogue. It is this play on words, coupled with the different settings and roles, that is responsible for the success of Maraya for so many years now.

AGENDA

Exhibitions

■ The Darat Al Funun, is currently showing numerous artworks by the Palestinian artists, Kamal Boullata and the late Zulfikar Al Sa'adi. The exhibition, which also features photos by the Palestinian-American photographer Saeed Nuseibah, will last until 12 November.

■ A special two-day exhibition of candles will open at the Goethe Institut on 11 November. The exhibit, entitled "Candles: They are of unique merit," will feature the wax-made handicrafts of Kareem Abu Shaqra and Ghaith Abu Sharif.

■ The Instituto Cervantes has a new exhibition of watercolor paintings by the Jordanian female artist Minkarram Hagboudouga, at 6 pm. The exhibit, and will continue until 24 November.

■ Abstract paintings by the Jordanian artist Mohammed Abu Aziz are currently showing at the French Cultural Center. The exhibition will last until 28 November.

Films

■ The American Center will be showing today, 12 November, the musical movie Singing In The Rain, starring Gene Kelly and Debbie Reynolds.

■ A French film enti-

itled Trois Hommes Et Un Couffin (Three men with a basket) will be shown at the French Cultural Center on the 16 November, at 6:30 and 8:30 pm.

■ The Goethe Institut will show the movie Cats of November, on 18 November, at 7:00 pm. The 1985 movie will be in English.

■ The Spanish movie Divinas Palabras will be shown at the Instituto Cervantes, on 19 November. The movie, made in 1987, is based on the story of a famous opera singer.

Lectures

■ The Goethe Institut will organize a series of lectures between 16-24 November. Two lectures will be held this week (16 and 17 November). The first is a 100 year historical account of excavations in Jordan, whilst the other will focus on preservation of historic memorials. Both lectures commence at 6:00 pm.

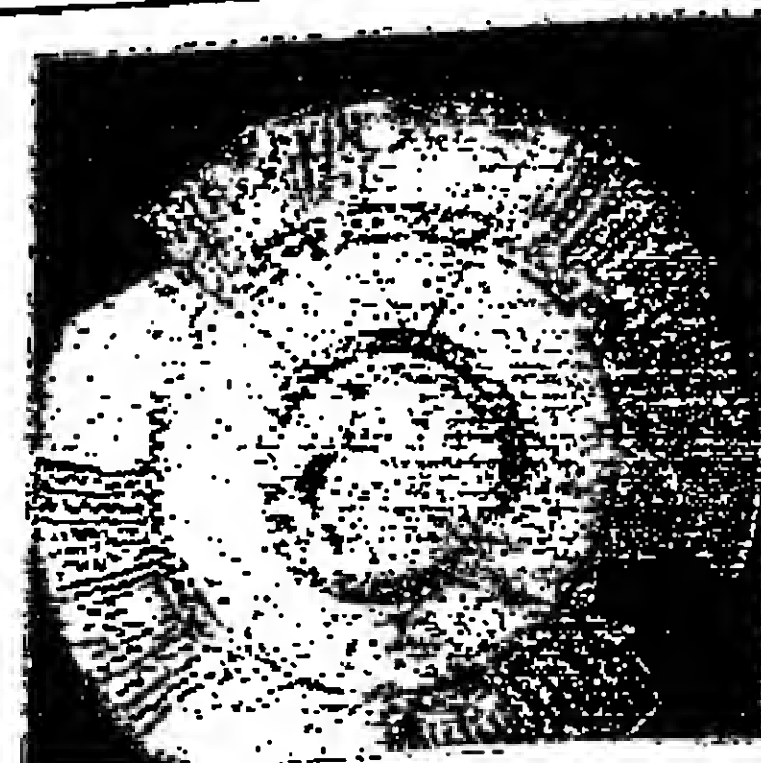
■ On 18 November, the University of Jordan will hold a special lecture about the Spanish playwright Valle-Inclán, at the Faculty of Arts. It will be delivered in Arabic, by Professor Rafa'at Afife. Later in the evening, Prof. Afife will present his Arabic translation of Divinas Palabras in the Institut Cervantes.

Le Jourdain

Supplément en français du Star

Le creuset transjordanien par Véronique Abu-Nijmeh

En bordure du couloir syro-palestinien, le plateau transjordanien, loin d'être isolé a toujours été profité des échanges commerciaux qui, dès une époque fort reculée ont relié les extrémités du croissant fertile. La Beidha néolithique recevait déjà, il y a 9000 ans, l'obsidienne d'Anatolie et du lac de Van dans le nord-ouest de l'Iran. Aux époques du Bronze Moyen (2100 - 1550 av. J.C.) et du Bronze Récent (1550 - 1200) s'épanouit un extraordinaire essor commercial qui véhicule entre la Mésopotamie et l'Égypte innovations technologiques et objets d'art. C'est également depuis cette époque que les cités transjordaniennes doivent compter avec les puissances voisines : de 1730 à 1550 environ, un peuple venu du nord de la Mésopotamie, les Hyksos contrôlent la région jusqu'au Nil. Ils y introduisent l'usage du tour rapide, le cheval, la roue et le char de guerre. L'usage du bronze se répand grâce à l'importation d'étain de Mésopotamie. Puis, au début du Bronze Récent, l'Égypte pharaonique repousse les Hyksos et étend son hégémonie sur l'actuelle Syrie-Palestine qu'elle dispute à l'Empire Hittite. Ainsi sur les sites de Deir Alla, Sahab ou Pella, se côtoient scarabées égyptiens, vases chypriotes ou mycéniens, pierres précieuses d'Anatolie, sceaux mésopotamiens, etc. C'est également au sein de ces échanges que les écritures cunéiforme et hiéroglyphique égyptiennes sont "importées" dans la région. Notamment, le site de Pella a livré un trésor contenant entre autres deux tablettes cunéiformes datant d'environ 1500 av. J.C., les plus anciennes découvertes à ce jour en Palestine et en Jordanie. Au milieu de cette effervescence culturelle, la céramique jordanienne se démarque par des caractéristiques purement locales : grâce à l'usage récent du tour rapide, les potiers de la région et particulièrement de Pella (voir photo), élaborent un style de céramique fine originale, à décor brun sur fond blanc. Son excellente qualité favorisera son exportation jusque sur les bords de la Méditerranée.



Éclaboussures

Ana-logique

Que les choses soient claires, j'ai un petit problème avec la logique. Je ne comprends pas tout. Déjà à l'école, mon professeur de mathématiques mettait réellement sa santé - et la mienne - en péril à force de m'expliquer que «un plus un font deux», que «c'est comme ça, et qu'on n'y peut rien changer» et que les mathématiques sont simples puisque la vie est logique. Mais bon, c'est comme ça. Je n'ai jamais compris.

Je ne comprends pas pourquoi mon jeune voisin est entré à l'Université alors qu'il n'est ni travailleur, ni ambitieux, ni enthousiaste. C'est à dire : je sais pourquoi. C'est sans doute parce qu'il est d'une grande et riche famille. J'en connais d'autres, des pauvres, qui n'ont pas sa richesse mais qui sont talentueux et opiniâtres : ils n'ont jamais vu un amphithéâtre. Je sais pourquoi mais je n'arrive pas à comprendre.

Partout on parle de la paix, dans les journaux, à la télévision ou à la radio... Mais là encore je ne comprends pas. Je ne comprends pas comment on peut parler de paix dans la région : je ne comprends pas. Le seul état de la région à posséder l'arme nucléaire, n'est-ce pas Israël? Comment Israël est donc à ce point terrorisé par les "terroristes" palestiniens, avec leurs pierres et leurs explosifs "faits-main"? J'ai beau m'interroger et retourner la question dans tous les sens : je ne comprends toujours pas.

L'autre jour je lisais dans un journal américain qu'il existe désormais tabas des psychiatres pour chiens et chats en proie à de terribles dépressions. Les pauvres. Heureusement qu'aux États-Unis on respecte les animaux. Qu'on prend soin d'eux. Faudrait-il que les enfants irakiens se changent en chiens ou en chats pour qu'enfin ils soient traités dignement? Là encore, c'est triste à dire, mais je ne comprends pas.

Après avoir si peu compris les choses, après m'être demandée pendant un peu plus de vingt ans si c'était moi qui étais stupide ou si c'était le monde qui était fou, j'ai bien envie de retrouver mon professeur de mathématiques. Celui qui me répétait que «un plus un font deux». J'ai envie de le retrouver pour lui dire qu'il avait tort. Tort de penser que les mathématiques sont faciles parce que la vie est logique. La vie n'est pas logique et un plus un ne font jamais deux.

Shadin Suleiman

Dès maintenant, vous pouvez vous abonner gratuitement à la liste de diffusion par Internet du Jourdain. Au programme, la chronique ammanite de notre collaborateur George Weibdeh et les critiques des films à l'affiche. Pour vous inscrire, adressez un courrier électronique à : le-jourdain@endoramail.com. Vous recevrez directement dans votre boîte aux lettres les rubriques en question.

Société

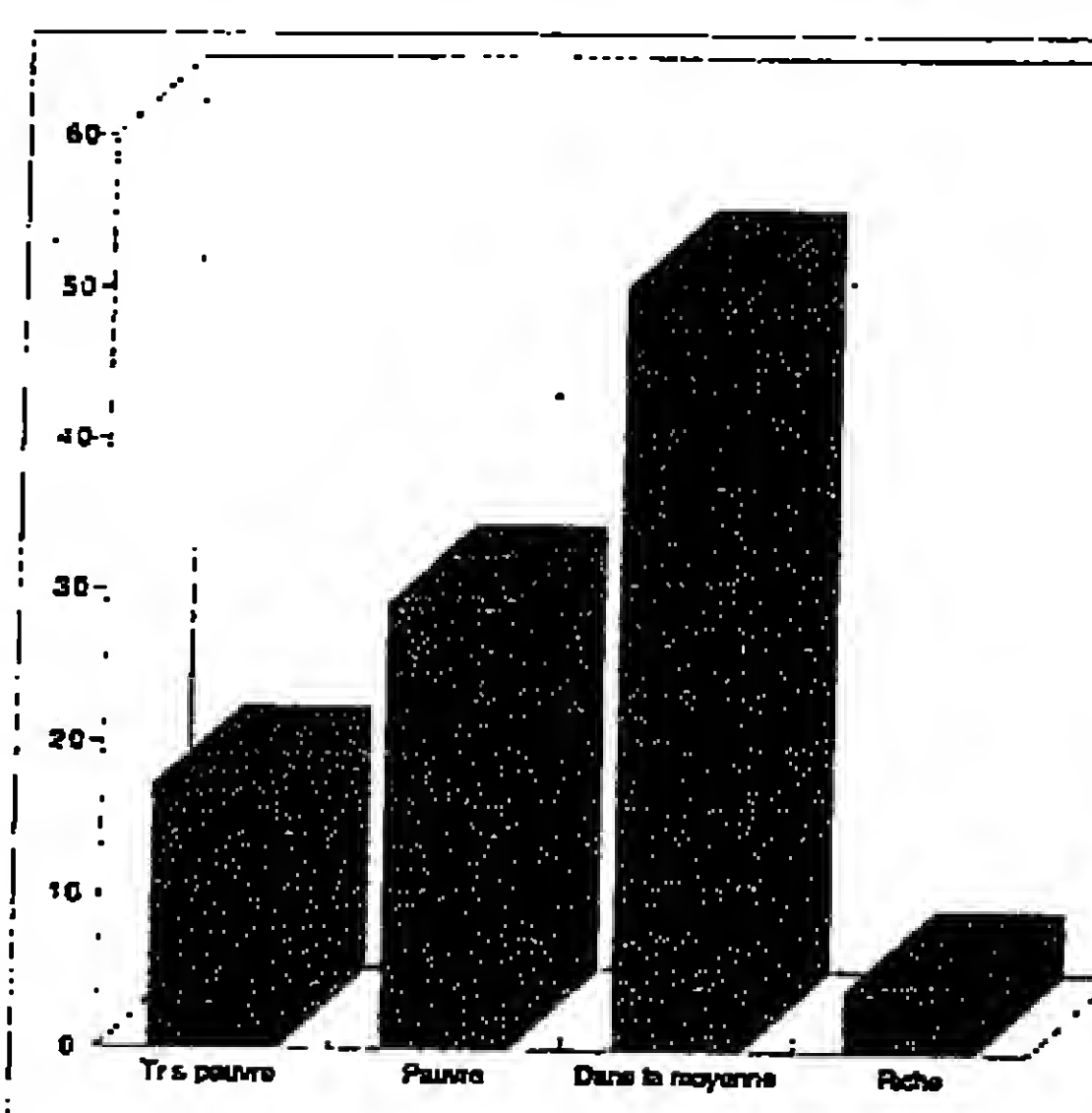
Les Jordaniens au crible de la statistique

Une vaste enquête sur la société jordanienne vient d'être réalisée par le Ministère des affaires sociales en collaboration avec l'Institut norvégien pour les sciences sociales. Elle met au jour les conditions de vie des Jordaniens et dresse un tableau pessimiste de la situation.

Une récente étude réalisée par le Ministère des affaires sociales, en collaboration avec l'Institut norvégien pour les sciences sociales, passe les conditions de vie des Jordaniens au crible de la statistique. Les conclusions de cette enquête font état d'un niveau de vie moyen en baisse, mais d'une diminution de l'illettrisme. Ainsi, il est fait état d'un taux d'alphabétisation de l'ordre de 83%, qui dénote une scolarisation en hausse, malgré les 5% de "fugitifs" qui n'assistent pas aux cours pourtant obligatoires jusqu'à l'âge de 16 ans. Cependant, l'accès à un niveau d'études supérieures reste relativement faible. Par exemple, chez les fonctionnaires, tous niveaux confondus, seuls 20% ont achevé un cursus universitaire. Ces mêmes fonctionnaires ne sont que 50% à avoir fini leurs études préparatoires, et à peine 30% peuvent revendiquer un niveau d'études secondaires.

Un chômage toujours élevé en fin d'études

À la sortie des universités et des instituts d'enseignement supérieur, le taux de chômage reste toutefois élevé, et les jeunes diplômés peinent de plus en plus à trouver un premier emploi. «Le programme qui a été mis en place par le gouvernement pour la réforme économique a permis d'activer la croissance économique du pays», explique Mohammad Mansar, Ministre des affaires sociales. Cependant, reconnaît-il, ce programme de "correction" économique a eu des effets négatifs sur les citoyens ayant des revenus limités. Depuis ces profond changements, il est vrai que le chômage est en constante augmentation. À la lumière des résultats de l'enquête, le gouvernement va mettre en place un système d'aide sociale visant à requalifier les plus démunis, afin de les resocialiser et d'accroître leurs revenus, ainsi qu'un programme de réhabilitation des zones les plus pauvres, comme les camps palestiniens. De même un programme de financement de projets de petite



A la question "Comment vous estimez-vous dans la société?" les Jordaniens ont répondu :

à 17%, très pauvre

à 29%, pauvre

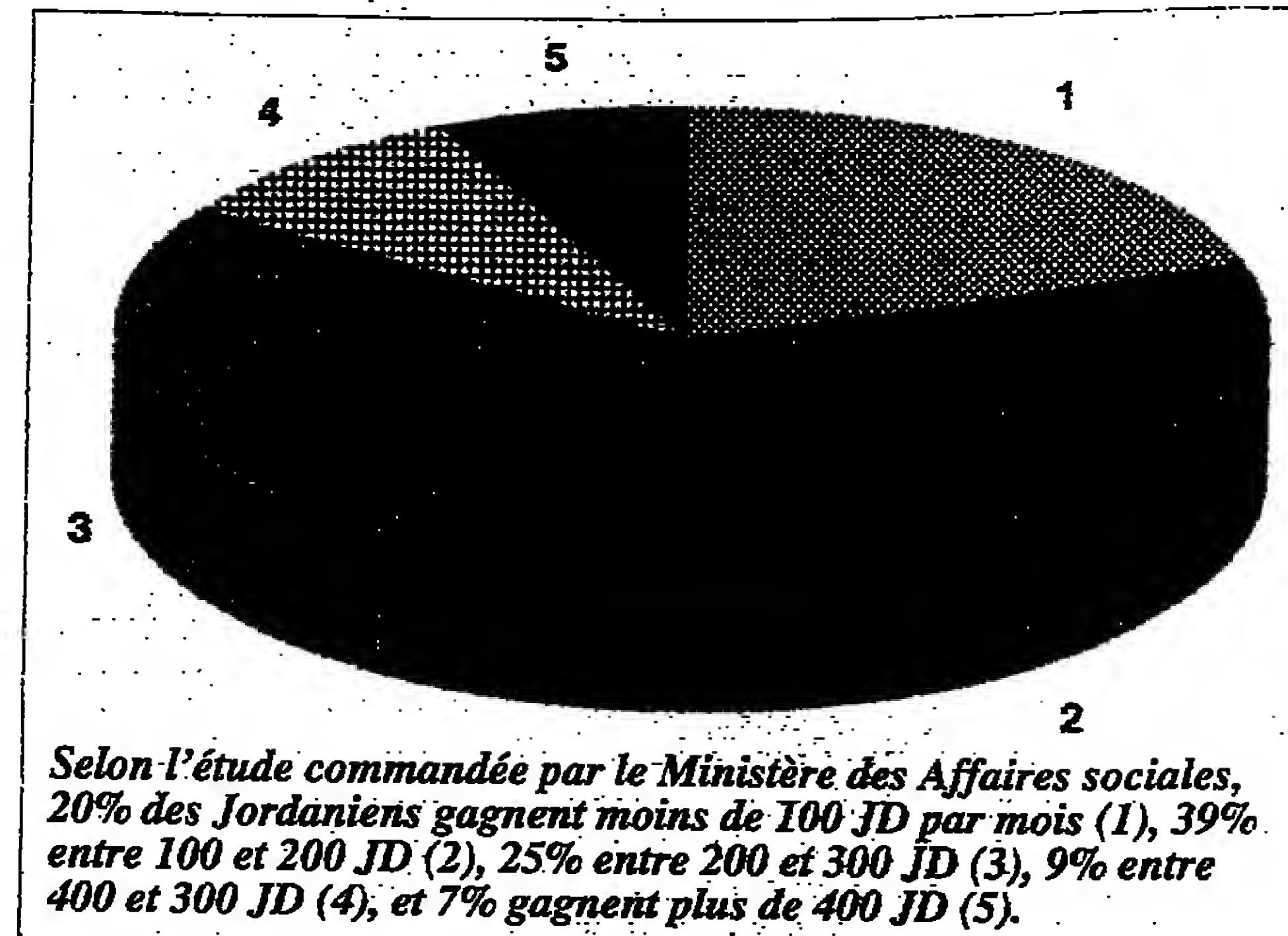
à 50%, dans la moyenne

à 4%, riche

gramme de réhabilitation des zones les plus pauvres, comme les camps palestiniens. De même un programme de financement de projets de petite

ampleur va voir le jour afin de permettre au tissu des petites et moyennes entreprises de se resserrer.

Le logement reste également extrêmement problématique. L'étude révèle ainsi que nombre de logements jordaniens sont surpeuplés et ne répondent pas aux plus élémentaires



Selon l'étude commandée par le Ministère des Affaires sociales, 20% des Jordaniens gagnent moins de 100 JD par mois (1), 39% entre 100 et 200 JD (2), 25% entre 200 et 300 JD (3), 9% entre 400 et 300 JD (4), et 7% gagnent plus de 400 JD (5).

normes sanitaires. Paradoxalement, une moyenne de 33% des salaires jordaniens est dépensée pour le logement, contre une moyenne de 40,5% pour la nourriture. Les produits alimentaires, ainsi que les produits de première nécessité, voient en effet leurs coûts augmenter, sans cesse, alors que le salaire moyen n'excède pas 150 dinars par mois.

Le prix de la nourriture en augmentation

Selon la banque centrale, le coût de l'alimentation a augmenté de 4,2 points depuis juillet 97. De même, le coût

des dépenses familiales et du logement a augmenté de près de 5 points depuis cette même date.

Plus grave, il semblerait, au vu de l'étude réalisée, que l'état de santé des Jordaniens se dégrade de plus en plus. Le tabagisme fait des ravages profonds dans la société, et dans certaine frange de la population, près d'un quart du salaire est consacré à l'achat de tabac. Par ailleurs, il semble que 67% des Jordaniens cherchent une assistance sanitaire auprès des services sociaux. Beaucoup ne trouvent d'ailleurs pas.

Pour Hans Power, directeur de l'Institut norvégien pour les sciences sociales, «les Jordaniens souffrent depuis des années en raison des conditions démographiques et économiques qui ont empiré. Un grand nombre d'entre eux, poursuit-il, est incapable de répondre aux besoins essentiels. La diminution du niveau de vie est remarquable, et les enfants d'un grand nombre de familles sont mal nourris». Cependant, il est possible que cette diminution du niveau de vie contribue à changer l'image et le rôle de la femme en Jordanie. Une femme qui travaille peut en effet apporter au foyer un revenu complémentaire substantiel et améliorer le quotidien. Selon les résultats de l'enquête, le revenu d'un foyer est augmenté en moyenne de 50 % lorsque la femme exerce une activité professionnelle. Mais aujourd'hui encore, seuls 12% des foyers se déclarent convaincus que la femme doit pouvoir exercer une activité professionnelle. Cependant, les revenus provenant de l'étranger d'un parent

émigré ne représente plus que 18 à 20%, contre 30% en 1984. L'étude ne précise toutefois pas s'il s'agit là d'une désolidarisation de la famille ou d'un "névrosisme" de l'économie jordanienne.

Quant au futur, sous l'éclairage pessimiste de l'étude du Ministère des affaires sociales, il n'apparaît guère plein d'espoir. Les changements de la structure de la société jordanienne, les changements économiques qu'elle initie représentent un véritable défi aux services publics et au marché du travail. Le nombre de Jordaniens va augmenter jusqu'à atteindre les 6,1 millions en 2010, contre 4,5 millions en 1997. Sans compter que les ressources naturelles de la Jordanie sont limitées et que sa situation géographique l'expose aux influences des multiples conflits qui secouent la région. Depuis son indépendance en 1946 l'État et l'économie jordanienne ont été secoués par les conflits israélo-arabes, et toutes les guerres successives qui ont marqué la région dont la dernière en date, la Guerre du golfe, ne fut pas la moins importante en terme d'impact sur la société. «Devant ces coups foudroyants portés par les politiques internationales des grands États», analyse le Dr Nabil Ammar, Ministre délégué au plan, la Jordanie a cherché, depuis sa naissance, à construire les institutions démocratiques de la société civile, renforcer le développement économique et améliorer le niveau de vie. Le plus dur reste toutefois, semble-t-il, à faire.

Youssef Abu Saleh

Le Fafo en questions

L'Institut norvégien pour les sciences sociales (ou Fafo) a été créé en 1982 sous un statut associatif, et est devenue une fondation en 1993 peu après les Accords d'Oslo entre Israéliens et Palestiniens. Mais son action ne se limite nullement au Moyen Orient. Il est aussi bien mandaté par des Organisations non gouvernementales que par des grandes entreprises privées ou encore des secrétariats d'état pour mener des études, essentiellement axées sur les sciences sociales (économie, politiques industrielles, sociologie, etc.). L'équipe du Fafo est constituée d'environ 80 chercheurs permanents, la plupart étant spécialistes de sciences politiques, de sociologie ou d'économie. Cependant, s'il a également mené des études en Europe de l'est, ou encore en Amérique

latine, c'est pour son action au Moyen Orient que le Fafo est le plus connu, et notamment pour une vaste enquête sur les conditions de vie sur les réfugiés palestiniens. Le Fafo se définit lui-même, sur son site internet, comme une «fondation indépendante vouée à la recherche». Il n'en reste pas moins que, sans remettre toutefois en cause la qualité et le sérieux des études menées, certains observateurs de la vie politique locale reprochent au Fafo une trop grande proximité avec des acteurs politiques liés aux accords de paix entre Palestiniens et Israéliens et en particulier la médiation norvégienne. Ainsi, certaines négociations entre les deux parties se seraient tenues dans les locaux mêmes du Fafo. Partant, une approche trop "socio-économique" du problème des

réfugiés est parfois reprochée aux études de Fafo. Le réfugié y est plus envisagé comme une personne démunie nécessitant une résocialisation que comme un individu aux aspirations politiques. Cette critique a été adressée à la fois par des chercheurs au regard des années 1980, et par un droitiste des années 1990. Malgré les critiques, le Fafo reste une référence pour les études sociales, et ses recherches sont très appréciées par la communauté internationale.

Pour plus de renseignements, consultez le site du Fafo : <http://www.fafo.no>

Le Jourdain

Portrait

Femme de bonne volonté

Pour son action contre la pauvreté, Mouyassar Al Sadi est la première femme jordanienne à avoir reçu un prix des Nations Unies. Elle se confie au Jourdain et évoque sa vie, son oeuvre.

«Être en face d'un grand homme, ce fut une façon pour moi de voir mon action reconnue», Mouyassar Al Sadi ne cache pas sa joie. Au début de cette année, lorsqu'elle a reçu des mains de Kofi Annan, le secrétaire général de l'ONU, le prix d'honneur attribué par le Programme pour le développement social des Nations Unies, elle a vu tous ses efforts récompensés au plus haut niveau. C'est en effet à l'occasion de la Journée internationale contre la pauvreté que la présidence du Programme pour le développement social de l'ONU a décidé de couronner les efforts personnels pour lutter contre la pauvreté de cinq femmes de différents pays (la France, l'Inde, la République Dominicaine, l'Ouganda et la Jordanie).

À 50 ans, cette Jordanienne d'origine palestinienne a toujours gardé cet enthousiasme juvénile qui lui a permis de mener à bien ses projets et d'être à la hauteur de ses ambitions.



Mouyassar Al Sadi, à New-York, recevant son prix des mains de Kofi Annan: «Être en face d'un grand homme, ce fut une façon pour moi de voir mon action reconnue».

Vous voulez écrire en français ? Alors n'hésitez pas à collaborer à la rédaction du Jourdain. Que vous soyez passionné de politique, d'économie, ou de faits de société, vos articles nous intéressent!

Pour tout renseignement, contactez Stéphane Foucart au 5664153

Retraintée en 1993, criblée de dettes, Mouyassar Al Sadi exerce comme bénévole au sein d'associations féminines - notamment l'Union des femmes jordaniennes (UJF) - et leur apporte son expérience d'infirmière. C'est dans le cadre de ces bénévoles qu'elle lance un projet d'artisanat visant à resocialiser les familles les plus pauvres. La fabrication artisanale de ces produits permettant un revenu suffisant à une existence décente. Mais les subventions nécessaires à un investissement minimal (matières premières, machines, etc.) ne sont pas aisées à trouver en Jordanie, malgré le soutien de l'Association Nour Al Hussein qui expose et vend les confections réalisées.

Mouyassar, cela favorise leur confiance en soi, et assure leur liberté.

«J'ai pris un pari fou!»

Pourtant avoue-t-elle, «je ne pensais pas qu'un jour je serais distinguée par les Nations Unies... Car lorsque je regarde en arrière, tout n'a jamais été que dureté et souffrance». Née en 1948 à Haila, en pleine guerre israélo-arabe, Mouyassar Al Sadi a dû d'abord quitter sa ville natale avec ses parents pour s'installer en Cisjordanie. «À 16 ans, mon père m'a demandé si je voulais me marier et j'ai répondu que j'étais d'accord à condition que mon futur époux me laisse travailler. En acceptant, continue-t-elle, j'ai pris un pari fou car à cette époque, les traditions interdisaient très fermement le travail aux femmes». «Heureusement», poursuit-elle, j'ai pu dès mon mariage exercer le métier d'infirmière. Mais, en 1967, Mouyassar, son mari et ses deux petites filles sont contraints de quitter la Cisjordanie, laissant derrière eux tous les biens accumulés : tout doit une fois de plus recommencer, ailleurs. «Nous sommes arrivés dans un quartier pauvre d'Amman, se souvient-elle avec un sourire douloureux. Nous habitons, ma famille et moi, dans une toute petite maison de Jebel Nouzha».

Mais malgré la sévérité du destin, Mouyassar ne s'est jamais inclinée devant les circonstances. Et la volonté d'améliorer son propre quotidien n'a jamais entravé son désir de porter secours aux autres. Ainsi, pendant trente ans, c'est à ses compatriotes les plus démunies qu'elle a consacré sa vie.

Chaque jour dans les camps

«Tous les jours j'allais dans les camps palestiniens, dans la vallée du Jourdain, explique-t-elle. Exercer mon métier d'infirmière, je m'occupais des malades les plus pauvres. Quand la guerre de 1968 a éclaté entre la Jordanie et Israël, j'ai décidé d'y prendre part à ma façon. Je m'occupais des soldats jordaniens blessés. Certains sont morts dans mes bras».

Depuis, les choses s'apaisent et Mouyassar Al Sadi connaît même une sorte de notoriété : lors des dernières élections parlementaires, beaucoup de femmes lui ont demandé de se présenter. Elle a préféré poursuivre son action et ne pas se mêler de politique. «La richesse, résume-t-elle, ne vient pas de l'argent ou du pouvoir. Elle vient de la bonne foi et de la confiance que l'on a dans l'homme».

Y. A. B.

«Nomade»

Les bédouins, des nomades très prisés par les touristes non nomades

Peinture abstraite par un jeune artiste jordanien, Mohammad Abu Aziz. Expo. du 7 au 28 novembre au Centre culturel français.

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The Star Stadium

Edited by Abdul Hamid Addasi

Jordanian Football Association cancels the Premier League

By Abdul Hamid Addasi
Special to the Star

AFTER TWO weeks of rumor and counter-rumor, the Jordan Football Association (JFA) announced the cancellation of the Premier League. The members of the JFA met with its President, HRH Prince Abdullah, on Monday, and the decision was made to cancel the Premier League. The meeting found that there would not be sufficient time to play the remaining games, as the Amman and Irbid stadiums are now under maintenance in preparation for the next Pan Arab Games. The JFA statement added that the cancellation will favor Al Wihdat, who are heading next

week to Saudi Arabia to participate in the Arab Club Championship. The JFA said that playing the remaining league matches now would interfere with the preparations for the Arab Club Championship. Al Faisali member, Haitham Al Majali, said his club was against the cancellation decision, but realized that acceptance was the only option available to them. Al Faisali were leading their main rivals Al Wihdat by two points, when the referee disallowed a goal by Al Faisali's striker Jerius Tadrus during the match against Al Qadessiah, which sparked Al Faisali's withdrawal from the league and the current crisis.

The cancellation decision will be advantageous to some, but not to others. Jordan's national football team will now have plenty of time to prepare their defense of the Pan Arab Games title next August. Unfortunately, the losers will be the smaller clubs who are destined to lose the much needed income that the remaining league matches would have provided. To conclude, the JFA decided to appease football fans in Jordan with a Al Faisali versus Al Wihdat friendly match, which will be played on the occasion of His Majesty King Hussein's Birthday. The match is being seen by many as the "unofficial" title decider.

Pan-Arab Games update

Iraq to participate in the Pan Arab Games

After sending invitations to all Arab Countries, the number of teams likely to participate is now becoming clearer. Iraq has announced that it will be participating in the games in August, and intends to send its largest delegation ever. Iraq was prevented from participating in the last two Pan Arab Games, as a direct result of its occupation of Kuwait in 1990.

However, the Iraqi announcement means that Kuwait will probably not be participating in August, as they have said that they would boycott the games if Iraq were in attendance.

Meanwhile, Tunisia, Saudi Arabia, and Qatar have all replied to the invitation, confirming their participation in the games. The Saudi Arabian football team—the current Arab Champions and probable Gulf Champions—are expected to spearhead the Saudi challenge.

JTV to retain Pan Arab Games TV coverage

Mr Nidal Al Dalkamoni, Chairman of Jordan TV, has denied rumors that his organization was intending to sell the television broadcasting rights for the Pan Arab Games to the Beirut

based Future Satellite station.

Al Dalkamoni added that JTV was the only television company to have the necessary infrastructure to cover the games, but that further investment is still needed to ensure maximum coverage.

JTV is widely expected to make a profit of around JD one million from the coverage of the next Pan Arab Games.

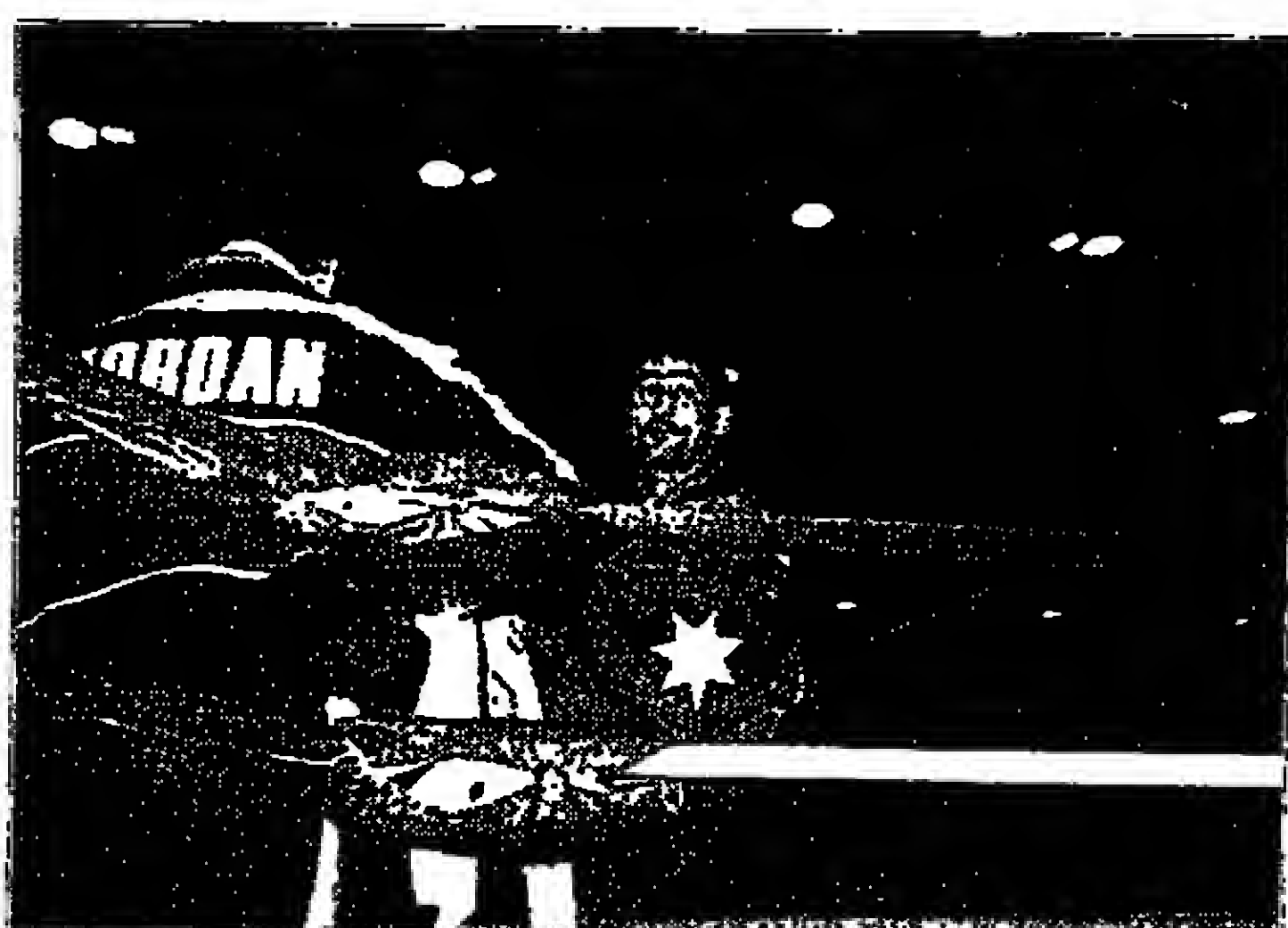
Abu Khadeejah triumphs again

The Jordanian boxer Mohammed Abu Khadeejah has kept that winning feeling, after he defeated the Tunisian boxer, Sami Alandobi—the current African Champion—in the 90 kg division at the Arab Boxing Championship held in Tunisia.

Abu Khadeejah's gold medal lifted the Jordan team to fifth place in the championship, along with the three bronze medals.

The championship was dominated by the North African countries; Algeria and Tunisia in particular.

This was Abu Khadeejah's third gold medal, after two previous victories, at the 8th Pan Arab Games held in Beirut last year and the West Asian Championship held in Iran.



Abu Khadeejah proudly wears the Jordanian flag after his victory

Fencing, Handball, Basketball and Cycling teams to miss Bangkok

The technical committee of the Pan Arab Games has decided to reduce the number of Jordanian athletes participating in the next Asian Games, to be held in Bangkok. After much evaluation, the committee decided to reduce the Jordanian delegation from 93 to 58. It was agreed that the Basketball, Handball, Fencing and Cycling teams would be withdrawn, because of their recent bad performances.



Journalists gather to report on the 20th Mens Handball Championship in Amman

Al Ahli (Egypt) and Al Sahel (Tunisia) take the lead

By Abdul Hamid Addasi
Special to the Star

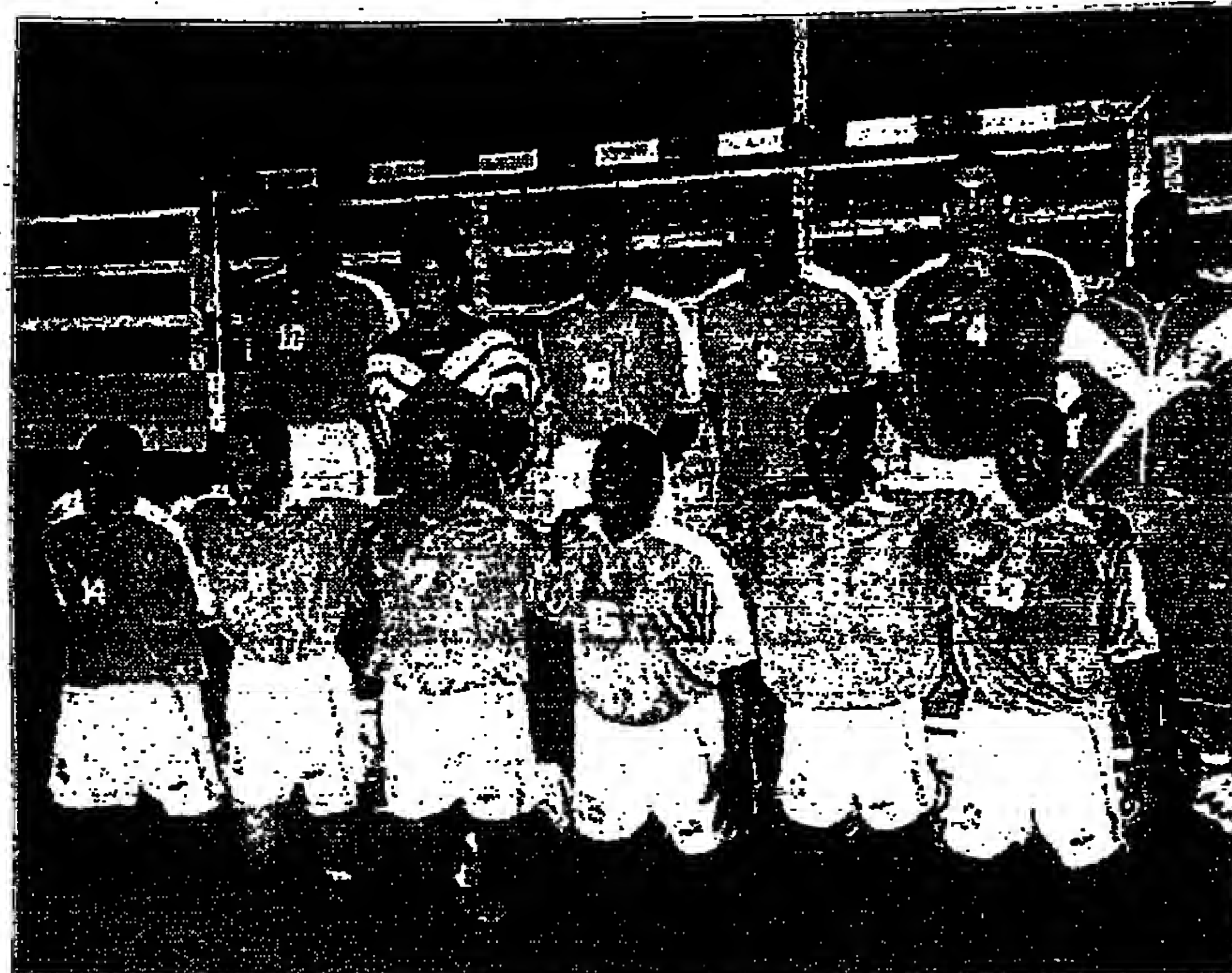
UNDER THE patronage of HRH Princess Sumyah bint Al Hassan—the honorary President of the Jordanian Handball Federation—the 20th Arab Mens Handball Championship got under way in Amman, Jordan this week (The 2nd Womens Handball Championship also got under way at the same time).

Seven nations are participating in both championships, which is due to end on the 14 November. Al Ahli (Egypt), Al Ahli and Al Jazeera (UAE), Al Ahli (Saudi Arabia), Qatar (Qatar) and Al Ahli and Al Salt (Jordan), are the teams



The Tunisian keeper from Russia?

participating in the mens competition. In womens competition.



Al Ahli (Saudi Arabia) before their opening match

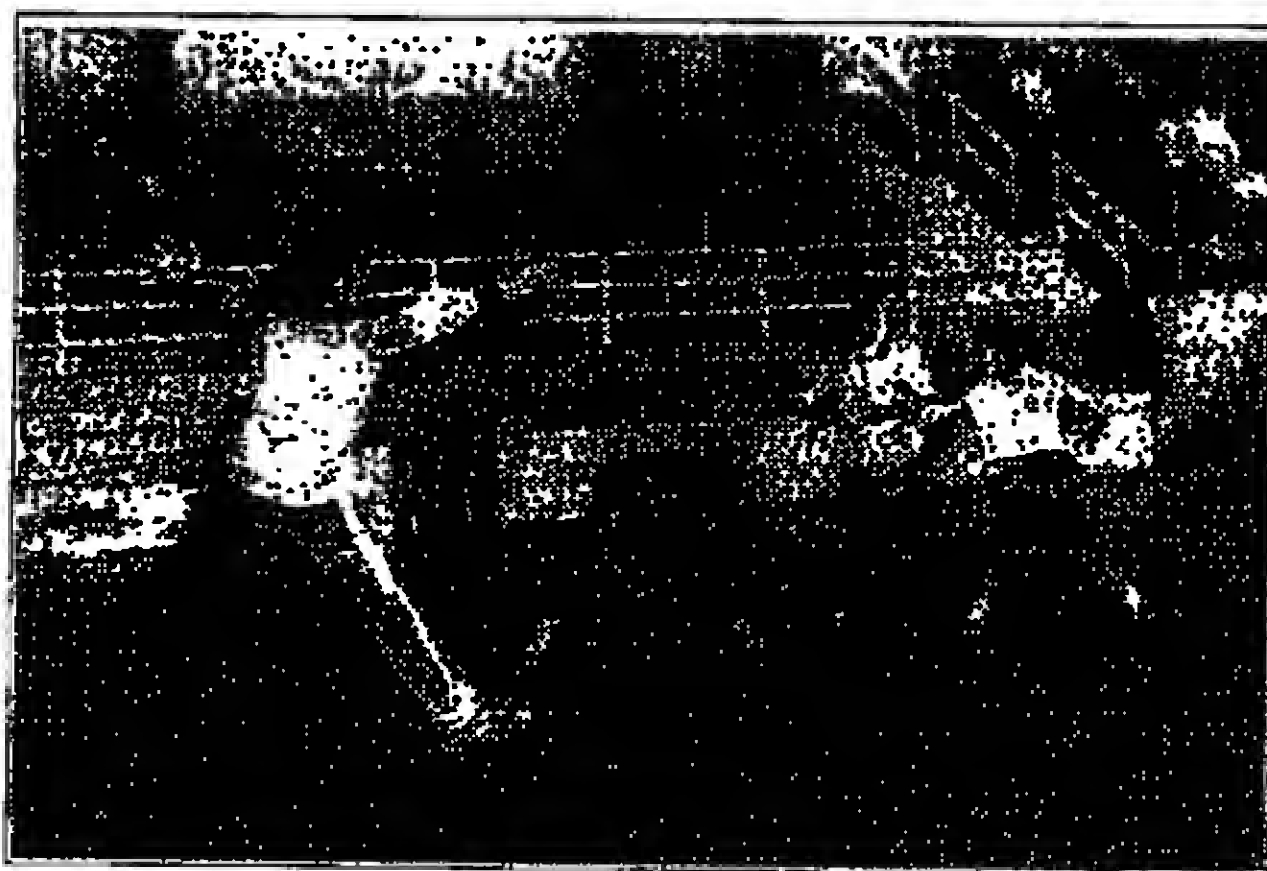
the participating teams are Al Ahli and Smoha (Egypt), Al Itihad (Syria), Al Mawloodiah (Algeria), and Hartha and Al Othodori (Jordan).

By Monday, Egypt's Al Ahli were leading the mens competition with six points from three victories, and are widely expected to clinch

the title. UAE's Al Jazeera were in second place, while Jordan's Al Ahli are still in the competition, having drawn in its first two matches.

In the womens competition, Al Sahel from Tunisia and Al Mawloodiah from Algeria are competing for

the title, and both teams are undefeated at the moment. Their match together will decide the winner. Jordan's Al Othodori and Hartha teams are both competing for last place, and their lack of experience has been very noticeable.



Action from a womens handball match

Football Roundup

German 1st Division match reports

Wolfsburg (7) B. M'gladbach (1)

After taking the lead in the third minute on a goal by Austrian striker Toni Polster, Moenchengladbach was flattened under a barrage of goals by Wolfsburg which led 4-1 at the half. Ghanaian Charles Akunor, Polish striker Andrzej Juskowiak and Roy Praeger each scored two goals and Scot Brian O'Neill added the seventh.

VfL Bochum (2) Hertha Berlin (0)

Bochum's Axel Sundermann capitalized on a goalkeeping error to put his side 1-0 up in the 60th minute with a close range header. An 89th-minute strike by Zdravko Drinic sealed victory.

Hamburg SV (2) Schalke 04 (2)

Despite extending its unbeaten streak to 13 games, Hamburg threw away a 2-0 lead earned by Bernd Hollerbach (39) and Ghanaian Tony Yeboah (67). Schalke clawed back to 2-2 with a 77th minute strike from Youri Mulder and an equalizer three minutes later from Martin Max.

SC Freiburg (0) Kaiserslautern (1)

Kaiserslautern emerged a narrow winner in a scrappy game thanks to a 37th-minute header by Bulgarian Marian Christov.

Hansa Rostock (2) E. Frankfurt (2)

Neither side did their struggle against relegation any favors by sharing the honors in a bottom-of-the-table clash. Norwegian Tore Pedersen put Eintracht ahead after 26 minutes but the home side equalized just before half time with a 44th minute goal from Uwe Ehlers. Timo Lange looked to have clinched a vital win for Hansa four minutes from time, but Eintracht's Bernd Schneider made it 2-2 in the 89th minute.

Bayern Munich (3) 1860 Munich (1)

After a goalless first half Bayern took the lead against 1860 with a 60th minute header from Jens Jeremies and a strike by Alexander Zickler four minutes later. A third goal by Thomas Linke three minutes from time sealed victory, with 1860 managing a consolation from defender Jochen Kientz in the dying seconds.

MSV Duisburg (1) Nuremberg (1)

Libero Thomas Vana ensured MSV Duisburg stayed undefeated at home by scoring in the 78th minute to give the Ruhr Valley club a point. Midfielder Heiko Gerber put the visitors in front in the 24th minute.

W. Bremen (1) B. Dortmund (1)

Dortmund international midfielder Lars Ricken exploited a blunder from Bremen's Swiss defender Raphael Wicky to open the scoring in the eighth minute. Yugoslav striker Rade Bogdanovic leveled from close range in the 62nd minute.

Italian 1st Division match reports

AC Milan (2) Inter Milan (2)

With an unprecedented 11 different nationalities taking the field in the Milan derby, it was almost inevitable that two World players of the year were on target in the first half. Ronaldo

put Inter into a seventh minute lead with George Weah levelling six minutes later, after a neat one-two with Oliver Bierhoff. In the second-half, the Italians took over with Francesco Moriero restoring Inter's lead in the 47th and Demetrio Albertini levelling the match with a contested penalty.

Bari (1) Parma (1)

South African striker Phil Masinga's late equaliser off Michele Marcolini's corner saved Bari from a sixth successive defeat.

Cagliari (3) Piacenza (2)

Newly promoted Cagliari moved up to seventh place but only after stern resistance. Roberto Muzzi opened the scoring with an overhead kick in the 20th only for Renato Buso to level in the 38th; both sides scored early in the second-half through Mohamed Kallon and Simone Inzaghi—brother of Juventus' Filippo—before Muzzi scored a superb decider.

Florentina (4) Venezia (1)

hour. Chile's Marcelo Salas added a lucky third—his seventh goal of the season—when Sereni's clearance rebounded off his heel. Roberto Mancini scored a fourth in the 62nd with Marco Carparelli claiming a late Empoli goal.

Perugia (3) Vicenza (1)

Vicenza's four match unbeaten run crumbled in the face of a superb second-half performance from Perugia. Milan Rapajic put the home side in front against the run of play in the 25th, before Gabriele Ambrosotti made-up for several near misses with a 30th minute equaliser. The match turned in the 50th minute when Lorenzo Stovini tripped Rapajic in the area and was sent off. Japan's Hidetoshi Nakata converted the penalty and ex-Parma striker Alessandro Meili grabbed a 75th minute third.

Sampdoria (1) Salernitana (0)

Adel Ortega brought Salernitana back down to earth after last week's first Serie A victory in 50 years against Lazio. The Argentine playmaker won and converted a 50th minute penalty to lift Samp out of the relegation zone; the home side finished with 10 men after recent French signing from Parma Salio Lassissi was sent off.

Udinese (2) Juventus (2)

Roberto Carlos Sosa, Oliver Bierhoff's replacement after the German moved to Milan, scored an injury-time equaliser as Udinese came from two goals down. Zinedine Zidane's first league goal of the season put Juve one-up on the stroke of half-time with Filippo Inzaghi making it 2-0 in the 50th. Italy international Jonathan Bachini pulled a goal back in the 65th, setting the stage for Sosa's dramatic late header.

English Premier League results

Arsenal (1) Everton (0)
Aston Villa (3) Tottenham (2)
Blackburn (1) Coventry (2)
Charlton (0) Leicester (0)
Leeds Utd (2) Sheffield Wed (1)
Liverpool (1) Derby (2)
Man Utd (0) Newcastle Utd (0)
Nottingham F. (0) Wimbledon (1)
Southampton (1)
Middlesbrough (3)
West Ham Utd (1) Chelsea (1)

French 1st Division results

Paris SG (2) Montpellier (1)
Lens (3) Le Havre (1)
Marseille (1) Monaco (0)
Bordeaux (2) Toulouse (0)
Rennes (4) Sochaux (0)
Nancy (2) Strasbourg (1)
Auxerre (1) Nantes (1)

Spanish 1st Division results

A. Madrid (1) Deportivo Coruna (1)
Mallorca (1) Villarreal (0)
R. Sociedad (3) A. Bilbao (1)
Salamanca (1) Real Zaragoza (2)
Valencia (3) Racing Santander (0)
Celta Vigo (5) Extremadura (1)
Alaves (1) Real Madrid (1)
Tenerife (2) Valladolid (2)
Oviedo (2) Barcelona (1)
Espanyol (1) Real Betis (0)

Newcastle's Shearer feels the presence of Manchester United's Stap

sive defeat by Parma. Diego Fuser finished off a sweeping move that started in defence with Lillian Thuram to put Parma ahead in first-half stoppage time. Fuser was then sent off in the 61st minute with Bari's Moroccan defender Rachid Negrouz for an off-the-ball clash.

Bologna (1) AS Roma (1)

Both UEFA Cup hopefuls started brightly and Bologna's Kennet Andersson should have put the home side in front before Paolo Sergio headed home Francesco Totti's cross at the far post to put Roma ahead. Giuseppe Signori, former hero of Roma's arch rivals Lazio, levelled the scores with a brilliant solo effort three minutes later, dribbling past defenders and keeper. Bologna's Giovanni Bia was sent off in the 59th.

Pasquale Padalino, at fault in Fiorentina's 2-0 defeat at Parma last week, made amends in the 22nd minute; Gabriel Badamuti took advantage of a mistake by ex-Florentina player Sergio Volpi to add a second in the 40th before Stefano Schwoch's 42nd penalty gave Venezia their second goal of the season. A 63rd minute Rui Costa penalty and Badamuti's 10th goal in eight league matches put Fiorentina top and left the Venetian side firmly rooted to the bottom.

Lazio (4) Empoli (1)

Lazio recovered from their first defeat of the season at Salernitana last week with three goals in eight minutes. Defender Paolo Negro beat Matteo Sereni in the 22nd before adding another five minutes later with a superb 20-metre shot. On the half-

THE STAR'S WORKSTATION COMPUTING & HIGH TECH

Computer & IT companies!

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The biggest computer and IT show in Jordan: METS '98, bigger and better

UNDER THE patronage of His HRH Abdullah, accompanied by HRH Princess Rania, the Middle East Technology Show '98 opened on Sunday, 9 November, 1998 and runs until Friday evening, 13 November, 1998.

METS is organized by the Jordan Computer Society (JCS) every year, and is the country's largest computer and information technology event.

This year, METS is much bigger with over 50 companies participating. The show hall is bustling with activity and all companies are showing off their latest hardware, software and accessories.

This year, the show is held under the slogan of "Have You Seen The World Tomorrow?" with an emphasis on the Year 2000 problem.

As usual, the top vendors are all present at the show, and you can expect to see all the well-known computer brands like IBM, Compaq, Acer, Tannet, Verex and many more.

Of course, the show displays the Internet services revolution that is sweeping Jordan, with all major Internet service providers participating in METS and with most web development and consultancy firms also displaying their services.

Parallel businesses, software office supplies and specialized information production companies are also participating in METS.

this year. In many ways, this year's event showcases the full spectrum of the information technology market in Jordan, complete with all parties involved.

The first actual participation of a regional company, Compaq



Middle East has an extensive booth at the show. This helps METS live up to its name that includes the words "Middle East," but there is still a long way to go before the show takes on a true regional character. However, in the meantime, METS serves the purpose for locals.

Last year, over twenty thousand people visited METS. This year, the number of visitors is expected to exceed this number.

For buyers looking for great deals, METS is a good place to look. After all, with so many companies under one roof, there's bound to be a great offer somewhere!

Moreover, METS is a great opportunity to purchase a par-

ticular piece of hardware or an accessory that you have wanted to get for a while. At the show, sales can be made, but most products are delivered to customers later, depending on the size of the purchase.

METS is a public computer show, with a strong "shopper" feel to it, especially at the entrance where many companies are offering low-priced products.

It is important to note the huge presence of the Jordan telecommunications Co. (JTC), which is the recently privatized entity that used to be the governmental telecommunications authority.

The JTC has been aggressively marketing its services over the past year and has been very successful in reaching out to customers. The JTC management deserves praise for that.

Companies participating in METS this year are: Ideal group, Abu-Rumelleh, Turath Center, Al Rahma Applied Technology, Abdul Majied



A look at Illustrator 8.0 from Adobe: Finally, real power for Windows

ILLUSTRATOR ON the Windows platform has always lagged behind the Macintosh version in functionality, as well as failing to conform to industry standards of other Adobe products.

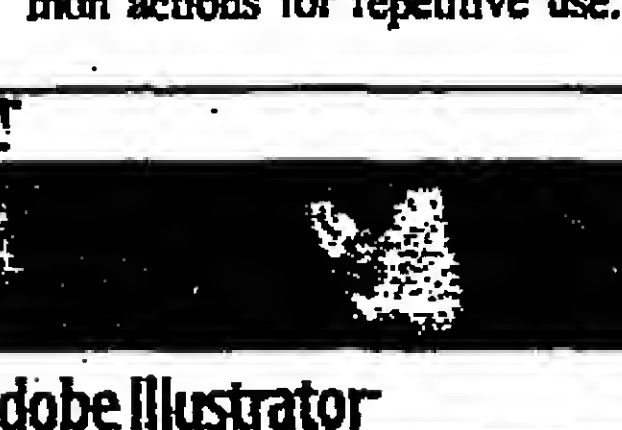
While Illustrator 7.0 was nearly equal to its Mac counterpart, the new version, 8.0, adds a lot of new features and bridges the gap successfully.

The tools in this new version are far more intuitive than in the last version of Illustrator—and feel as though you are working in a more natural way.

For instance, previously you had to edit drawing paths by carefully moving anchor points. Now, you can edit them using the fast and responsive

pencil tool to redraw paths until you are satisfied.

Illustrator 8.0 finally introduces an action palette that lets you record and play back common actions for repetitive use.



Adobe Illustrator

In addition, the program now automatically pops up smart guides that let you snap objects into alignment.

Adobe finally made Illustrator's interface similar to the rest of the Adobe family, with sim-

ilar menus, palettes and dialogue boxes. The links palette works like that of PageMaker. The Navigator palette is like that of Photoshop and many more aspects look the same.

In addition, Illustrator can export its drawing layers to Photoshop layers, lightening the integration between the two major vector drawing and bitmap editing tools.

Adobe have dramatically reduced the price of Illustrator by more than \$200, making it more affordable for smaller design companies.

With the improvements, Illustrator is very attractive. Adobe Illustrator sells for \$375 on the international market. For more information, visit the Adobe Web site at www.adobe.com.

IBM offers smallest hard disk

ENGINEERS AT IBM have invented the tiniest hard disk ever, and its supposed to be designed for hand held computers, digital still cameras, digital video cameras, GPS navigation systems, cellular phones and more.

The IBM Microdrive is just 0.7 ounces and 0.2 inches high.

This is amazing for a 340MB hard disk! The Microdrive is a mechanical device with a spinning disk, unlike flash memory storage cards,

used in notebooks. This makes it cheaper, and enables it to hold five times more content.

Designed at IBM's Almaden Research Center, the Microdrive is based on IBM's giant magnetoresistive heads, which are ultra-sensitive to the disk's magnetic very tiny

fields and makes it possible.

A Microdrive fits into a standard CompactFlash Type II slot, designed originally for flash memory cards. Canon, Hewlett-Packard, Hitachi, IBM and Minolta are all evaluating the Microdrive for use in their future gadgets.

News update

HP 2000c series

● The HP Professional Series 2000c is a high quality and fast color printing powerhouse, designed for networks. It resembles a departure from typical printer designs, with an attractive rounded shape.

The printer uses separate ink cartridges and print heads, which not only reduces the cost of consumables but also makes it much quieter. It includes ColorSmart II technology, with a new color matching standard for consistent

color between monitor and printer. The Professional Series 2000c also supports Kodak Image Enhancement, which provides better images.

Actrix technical from AutoDesk

● Actrix Technical enables users to create industry specific technical diagrams, and drawings that work demands.

Actrix allows users to create space plans, engineering schematics, flowcharts and piping and instrumentation diagrams quickly and easily. Its intelligent, drag-and-drop Active Shapes accurately snap, align, and attach to each other and to AutoCAD background drawings. This automates most work steps. It simply provides smarter diagramming.



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From the classics

Handel remembered

By Rasheed Al Roussan
Special to The Star

LIKE THE Olympic torch carried every year, the legacy of classical music goes on, from Bach to Haydn to Mozart, and later on to Beethoven and Schubert. The list is endless, but the golden web of music has paved the way for minds like Bach to elevate art to the highest degree of intellect.

Moreover, the same year in which Bach was born marked the birth of another composer: George Frederick Handel. Born in 1685, Handel became one of the greatest composers of the late Baroque period.

The young German composer began his first organ lessons when he was just nine years old. Those lessons were the only formal musical instructions he had ever attended.

The young Handel engrossed himself in music. However, it was only when he was 19 that his musical talent reached its fruition when he composed his first opera, *Almira*, which was performed in Hamburg which was the center of opera in Germany back then.

But it was to Italy that he travelled to. Rome was regarded as the capital city of opera in the world. It was there that his operas, oratorios (large dramatic compositions for instruments and voices), and many small secular cantatas. He ended his Italian sojourn with the spectacular success of his fifth opera, *Agrippina* (1709), which he composed in Venice.

Another operatic triumph awaited him back in his home country, when he composed *Rinaldo*. Some of Handel's greatest concertos—the solo concertos of op. 4 (1736, five for organ and one for harp) have played a role in revolu-

tionizing the baroque style. Together with Bach, he was to prove the most innovative.

But throughout his life, Handel avoided Bach's contrapuntal (counterpoint) techniques. Handel's music was simple, but had creative depth. At the same time, however, it carried an almost delicate but mesmerizing sound.



His mastermind lies in his dramatic and lyrical use of Baroque musical techniques. He very much employed these in his operas and oratorios. In this respect, his operas fluctuated between the rigid use of the conventional style of music and his original, total innovations. His ability to invent dramatic scenes around specific characters later had much influence on composers like Mozart and Rossini.

Furthermore, the oratorios of both the Austrian composer Joseph Haydn and the German Felix Mendelssohn owe a great deal to Handel who inspired them to divulge into the realm of great music. His oratorios carried great meaning. His religious inspiration for instance had great passion—something which penetrated his music during his life.

What is interesting is that Handel was one of the first composers to have a biography written about him, to have annual celebrations of his birth, and to have a complete edition of 40 volumes of his music published.

Beethoven later came to cherish this set. Although today—as in the 19th century—Handel is best known for only a few of his works, such as *Water Music* and *Messiah*, more and more attempts are being made to bring his other compositions, especially his operas, under the public's eye. Handel's torch will burn forever.

By Farah Qassem
Star Staff Writer

FASHION DESIGN is probably the hottest thing in the world of glamor. Today, fashion designers are inspired by the most obscure of ideas. A concept is formed then designed using the most fashionable material. Of course, it is the hands of the designers that make all the difference.

Jordanian Azmi Sawalha, who is well-known for his designs which are fashionable among local women because he blends together the latest



Fashion designer says pastel colors will shine this winter

Western trends with a very indigenous and appealing style. The end product is always appreciated by his loyal female fans in Jordan.

"This winter, the colors in vogue internationally will be the dusty 'pastel' colors which include the blue/pink gray, and the off-white, they are of various shades and end with the beige," says the 48-year-old designer.

"While the skirts are of different lengths, the most common for the next winter season will be the knee-length variety. This is simply because these garments are the most practical and fashionable for the Jordanian woman of today," Sawalha adds.

"Long trousers will continue to be at the front of the shop window, as these are also very popular, and the 'cigarette design' will be back in favor."

Keen to obtain an academic qualification, Sawalha headed to Italy to study fashion and design. He returned to Jordan in 1971, and set up his own business in his chosen profession.

"Some people say that the average Jordanian woman doesn't dress a *la mode*, but the truth is that they understand that simplicity is the main fac-



Sawalha and his collections

tor in dressing elegantly," says Sawalha.

Commenting on the trend for lavish and over the top fashion shows, which have no connection to the majority of those who are interested in fashion, Sawalha says these "types of shows have only one goal—to attract as much media attention to the designer himself, and further his image. Sometimes, experienced designers use young, innovative designers to add creativity to their work, to register the name of the designer with the fashion world, if you like."

Sawalha refuses to restrict himself to one style when he is making designs. "Our society is very conservative, but we as a nation enjoy getting dressed up on big occasions, which gives women the chance to show their *savoir faire*," Sawalha points out.

The designer follows a set path whenever an idea comes into his head. "If I have a flash of inspiration, I immediately head to the cloth and begin cutting and shaping with my scissors," Sawalha adds. "Unfortunately, I am not very good at drawing, otherwise I would sketch the



designs in the conventional fashion." Like many other professions, fashion designing has had its fair share of problems. Stealing of designs, the economic recession and the imports of ready-made clothes have had a negative impact on the fashion design business in Jordan.

"Most of the fashion shows I organize are economically non-viable, but it's a way of establishing confidence between the designer and the client. At the end of the day, if people like my product, they will buy it," concludes Sawalha.



The magic of Henna



Lubna Khader

Star Staff Writer

IN THE past women sought to overcome the aging process by doing their best to protect their beauty and looks. This has been going on since the time of Cleopatra. She started the ball rolling by using as many natural herbs as possible to keep her beauty everlasting. Since then, women around the world have been searching for new and innovative ways to maintain their beauty, following in the footsteps of the Pharaoh queen.

Cleopatra's secret has yet to be uncovered, but thousands of years later, a new revolution has taken place in the field of make-up. A new method of beautification has been discovered, by using the henna plant which has been growing since

time began. Henna is a plant that grows in India, and comes in two colors—red and black. People have learnt to use henna in a variety of ways.

The Indians were the first to use it to strengthen their hair, and to add color to their faces.

"In western countries these days, people use it to change the color of their hair," said Khalil Al Sayed, a beauty expert in Amman. "However, in Palestine, Jordan and in the Gulf countries, henna is used to beautify the bride and groom on their wedding day. They call it *Lylat Al Henna* (Henna Night)," Sayed told *The Star*. "On that night the bride's family and friends bring the henna on a tray and start to apply the henna on the exposed parts of the skin." The beautician said that

other uses were being employed for henna in Jordan and Palestine. "These days henna is applied to the skin in the form of drawings, something which is inspired by local tradition," said Sayed. "Henna is applied to the skin, and then covered with a white cloth for one day to dry. On the wedding night, the women take off the cloth to reveal beautiful tattoos."

"The use of Henna is fashionable today, specially among the 18 to 25 age groups," Sayed said, "and the process of preparing the henna is simple. I knead it with water and put it inside a special pointed pipe. I then draw the outline of whatever shape they want, be it a butterfly, a bird or something else, and when that is dry, I apply Henna to the skin. The whole process takes about two hours, and then you wash the Henna off, to reveal the dark orange design."

There are many kinds of Henna, but experts believe that the best variety comes from India. "I believe that those who deal with Henna should be experienced," Sayed adds. "However, should anything go wrong with the design, you do not need to worry, because Henna is a temporary beauty treatment—it disappears after one week."

Henna is very fashionable in Amman these days, and pop idol

Madonna made a lot more fans in Jordan when she applied henna to her hands and face.

Ziad Rahbani, the multi-talented artist

AMMAN

(Star)—There is no-one in the Arab world who hasn't heard of Ziad Rahbani. Although he is known best as a Lebanese singer, he is also an actor, songwriter, composer, presenter and a bit of a comedian.

Son of the famous singer Fairouz, and renowned composer 'Asi Rahbani (a perfect duo for years), Ziad went on to become equally known for his controversial themes.

Whether in his plays or in his songs, he speaks of issues that affect Lebanese society, such as unemployment, the high cost of living, corruption, youth alienation and love in a country that just emerged from a long civil war.

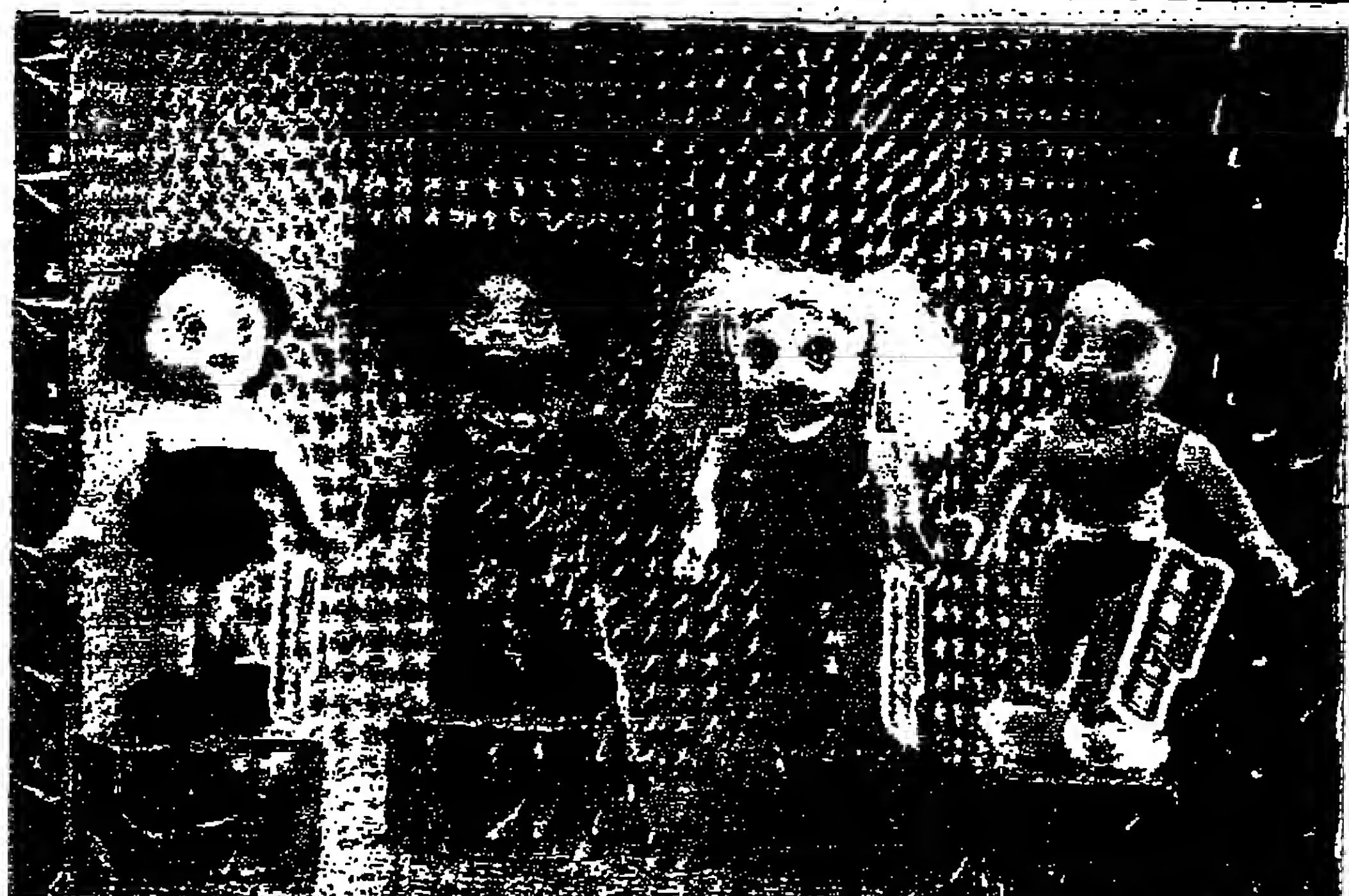
Acting and singing for Ziad also means being funny

and appealing. He says adopting comedy in his acts helps him to pass his message across to the audience, no matter how heavy the subject is.

His plays—which attract large audiences that include intellectuals, the ordinary man in the street and plain outcasts—are a breath of fresh air, because of their honest and critical content.

Ziad Rahbani's music is a combination of oriental and western music, particularly Jazz. Ziad believes that music is an international language, that travels across the world cutting territorial boundaries.

Recently, Ziad was invited to perform in the 'Lebanese Week' at the Institut du Monde Arabe in Paris, France.



The Idea Factory has joined forces with the Bravado International Group to introduce the official licensed Spice Girls beanbag collectibles featuring Baby (Emma Bunton), Sporty (Melanie C.), Posh (Victoria Adams) and Scary (Melanie Brown) shown in this undated publicity photograph released 9 November. The dolls will hit store shelves after Thanksgiving in the United States. Reuters